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**Framing war, sport and politics
the soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow Olympics**

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KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

DEPARTMENT OF WAR STUDIES

FRAMING WAR, SPORT AND POLITICS:
THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN AND THE MOSCOW
OLYMPICS

BY

CHRISTOPHER G. DEAL

Thesis for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the reporting of the Soviet international broadcaster Radio Moscow, and how it represented to listeners worldwide the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent US-led boycott campaign against the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games. In doing so, it builds on literature that has examined Cold War radio broadcasting, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the politics surrounding the Moscow Olympic Games. Specifically, this thesis sheds new light on the outputs of Soviet broadcasting, and on the ways the Soviet Union tried to justify their actions and condemn the actions of the US to different audiences worldwide.

Using the BBC Monitoring Service material archived at Imperial War Museums, Duxford, and applying the concept of frame analysis, this thesis concentrates on six key moments after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in the build-up to the Moscow Olympics. It provides not only examples of how Radio Moscow reported specific events, but how the reporting evolved over time. In addition, the use of transcripts from broadcasts to multiple target audiences provides evidence of how Soviet broadcasting was adapted to appeal to different listeners worldwide, allowing for a comparison of reporting between regions, as well as over time, and to build understanding of how the Soviet Union viewed the world in 1980.

The thesis shows that Radio Moscow adapted its broadcasting to appeal to different audiences, and it highlights key examples of how this was achieved. The case studies demonstrate a series of particularly prominent frames used by Radio Moscow, to both suggest and create divisions between groups and as a way of attempting to reinforce previous Soviet claims about the world. The study also examines how these were localised to appeal to the targeted audience, for example focusing on religion in broadcasts to the Middle East and specific world leaders in broadcasts to North America and Europe. The thesis concludes by discussing what this radio material demonstrates of the Soviet view of the world. In doing this, the thesis also highlights the usefulness of the BBC Monitoring Service as a tool for researchers looking to further explore radio broadcasting and alternative state-to-state diplomacy in detail.

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DECLARATION

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	Agence France-Presse
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BOA	British Olympic Association
DD	BBC Daily Digest
FBIS	United States Foreign Broadcast Information Service
IOC	International Olympic Committee
RFE	Radio Free Europe (American Broadcaster)
RL	Radio Liberty (American Broadcaster)
RM	Radio Moscow (Soviet Broadcaster)
RPP	Radio Peace & Progress (Soviet Broadcaster)
NOC	National Olympic Committee
TASS	Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union
SWB	BBC Summary of World Broadcasts
VOA	Radio Station: Voice of America (American Broadcaster)
WELLE	Radio Station: Deutsche Welle

References for the BBC Monitoring Services archive at Duxford are given in the following format (where information is available): Archive / Broadcast State / Targeted Broadcast Region / Box Number, Radio Station, Target Audience, Date of Broadcast, Time of Broadcast, Number of Broadcast, Name of Broadcast, Transcript Page. *All are from the archive Imperial War Museum (IWM) and the state Soviet Union (SU).*

e.g. IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 30th January 1980, 2000, 4, 'Vantage Point', p.5

Broadcast region abbreviations used:

B	Soviet Union Home Services
C	English Language Records
D	Western Europe Records
E	Eastern Europe Records
F	Other – Arabic and Persian, and also language broadcasts to Afghanistan, states in Africa and Turkey.

Target Audience abbreviations in footnotes:

Arabic	Persia (Arabic Language Broadcast)
Bulg	Bulgaria (Bulgarian Language Broadcast)
Czech	Czechoslovakia (Czech Language Broadcast)
Eng Asia	South East Asia (English Language Broadcast)
Eng Africa	Africa (English Language Broadcast)
Finn	Finland (Finnish Language Broadcast)
Fre Africa	Africa (French Language Broadcast)
Fre Europe	Europe (French Language Broadcast)
Fre Alg	Algeria (French Language Broadcast)
GBI	Great Britain & Ireland (English Language Broadcast)
Ger	East Germany (German Language Broadcast)
Greek	Greece (Greek Language Broadcast)
Home	Soviet Union (Russian Language Broadcast)
Hung	Hungary (Hungarian Language Broadcast)
Italian	Italian (Italian Language Broadcast)
Mace	Macedonia (Macedonian Language Broadcast)
N.Am	North America (English Language Broadcast)
Polish	Poland (Polish Language Broadcast)
Port Europe	Portugal (Portuguese Language Broadcast)
Port Africa	Africa (Portuguese Language Broadcast)
Serb	Yugoslavia (Serb-Croat Language Broadcast)
Spain	Spain (Spanish Language Broadcast)
Turkish	Turkey (Turkish Language Broadcast)
WSE	Worldwide (English Language Broadcast)
Romanian	Romania (Romanian Language Broadcast)
Slovene	Czechoslovakia (Slovene Language Broadcast)
Persian	Persia (Persian Language Broadcast)
Pashto	Afghanistan (Pashto Language Broadcast)
Shona	Zimbabwe (Shona Language Broadcast)

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

'Freedom of speech in general means nothing. When meant to relate to the media it must be examined as whose freedom of speech? Freedom of speech for what interests? It is those interests that are important – are they the people's or not? There cannot be non-selective media. The issue is: selectivity for whom?'

Vladimir Pozner, Radio Moscow North American Service, 23rd January 1980.¹

This thesis examines how the Soviet Union international radio broadcaster, Radio Moscow, reported the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the resultant US-led campaign to boycott the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, and explores how the focus of this reporting shifted depending on the target audience. Using the Imperial War Museum's BBC Monitoring Service archive, a unique and vast unexplored collection of radio transcripts, it incorporates the concept of frame analysis to investigate what Radio Moscow said, and why.²

This thesis uniquely focuses on the Soviet broadcasts that were targeted on different audiences around the world. Despite Gary Rawnsley's assertion that international radio broadcasting 'helped to sustain [the Cold War] as an endemic state by perpetuating tensions, attitudes and predispositions', almost all research in the area has concentrated on broadcasts directed towards the Warsaw Pact states from the West, such as the works by A. Ross Johnson, Arch Puddington and Michael Nelson.³ There is a gap in the literature here that this thesis works towards bridging – Simo Mikkonen has examined Soviet broadcasting in a book chapter, Barak Hazan has incorporated some Soviet radio broadcasting into his book examining the Soviet propaganda build up to the Moscow Olympics, and a journal article by Don Smith examined how

¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 23rd Jan 1980, 0030, section 2

² Imperial War Museums Duxford holds BBC Monitoring transcripts of numerous radio broadcasters worldwide, including Soviet broadcasters, from 1939 to 1982. Furthermore, the archive contains material derived from these transcripts – *The Daily Digest* and *Summary of World Broadcasts* (dates 30th August 1939 – 12th April 1947).

³ G. Rawnsley, *Radio Diplomacy and Propaganda* (Macmillan Press Ltd, 1996). p.166, A. Ross Johnson and R. Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents* (Central European University Press, 2010); A. Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty* (University Press, Kentucky, 2003); M. Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War* (Syracuse Press, 1997).

Americans perceived Soviet broadcasting in the 1960s.⁴ There has been no substantial text on Soviet broadcasting, and only Hazan has briefly explored Soviet media in the build up to the Olympics – analysis of the boycott campaign has also concentrated on western actions rather than Soviet reactions. This thesis joins Hazan’s work, and the work of Smith and Mikkonen, in being a rare analysis of the Soviet perspective. Studies have all rightly assumed the Soviet Union was firmly against the boycott, and have given some examples of Soviet attempts to break the campaign, but none have explored, as this thesis does, the daily campaign that echoed around the earth via radio shortwave, or indeed how the campaign was adapted to make it more appealing to specific audiences.

This brief introduction provides the historical background to this study, introducing the context in which Radio Moscow was acting and explains why there is a need to explore Soviet broadcasting at this time. It then moves on to expand on the aims of the thesis and the thesis structure. Following this, the next chapter provides an overview of research that has been carried out in areas relevant to this thesis, namely shortwave radio broadcasting, Cold War radio broadcasting, the Soviet invasion, and the boycott campaign itself.

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Soviet Union’s military occupation of Afghanistan began on the 25th December 1979, with a coup that placed the Soviet-backed Babrak Karmal in nominal charge – ‘another feckless ruler entirely dependent on the presence of foreign troops’.⁵ This started a war that lasted nine years and fifty-two days.⁶ Outside the Communist bloc, the world responded with near-universal condemnation of Soviet actions, and despite the Soviet use of their veto in the United Nations Security Council in early January 1980, the UN General Assembly managed to call for an ‘immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan’ just a few days later.⁷ The United States led the imposition of sanctions on the Soviet Union, with far

⁴ S. Mikkonen, “To Control the World’s Information Flows - Soviet Cold War Broadcasting,” in *Airy Curtains in the European Ether*, ed. A. Badenoch, A. Fickers, and C. Henrich-Franke (Nomos, 2013), 241–269. B. Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980* (Transaction Publishers, 1982). D.D. Smith, “Some Effects of Radio Moscow’s North American Broadcasts,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (January 1970): 539.

⁵ T. Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* (Princeton Univ Pr, 2010). p.237

⁶ R. Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89* (Profile Books, 2011). p.8

⁷ J.J. Collins, *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: A Study in the Use of Force in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Lexington Books, 1986)., p.86 – Even two socialist states seemingly went against the Soviet Union as Yugoslavia voted against the USSR, and Romania abstained from voting.

from universal support, and then, arguably most divisively of all, led the calls to boycott the 22nd Olympic Games, hosted by Moscow in July 1980.

The campaign to boycott the 1980 Olympic Games became, and remains, the largest concerted use of a single international sporting event to air political grievances – but it did not remove Soviet Union forces from Afghanistan.⁸ Furthermore, between the invasion in December 1979 and the opening of the Games in July 1980, the Olympic boycott was the cause of great debate within and between states. It was highly divisive, and this was added to by the nature of the Olympic movement (which required national Olympic committees to be independent of national politics), that meant in theory state governments had no control over Olympic attendance.⁹ Ultimately, the United States did not gain the immediate and universal support they hoped for, or indeed expected, but, at the same time, the Soviet Union hosted an Olympics that was noticeably weakened in numbers by a boycott in response to its foreign policy. Despite this, the same number of world records was set as at the previous, larger (and boycotted by ‘only’ 28 states) 1976 Montreal Olympics.¹⁰ Whilst the Soviet military was involved in Afghanistan, Soviet media had to continually justify the invasion and, between December 1979 and July 1980, counter the calls for a boycott of the Moscow Olympics. This thesis argues that both were significant moments in the Cold War, and that the Olympic boycott campaign in particular highlighted the dynamics of international state relations in a manner that few other events during the Cold War could manage. By focusing on how the Soviet Union informed the world both about their actions in Afghanistan and the US-led boycott of the Moscow Olympics, this thesis opens up understanding of how the Soviet Union reported world events and builds upon the arguments that the Cold War was more complex than just an East versus West conflict.¹¹

Much has been written about how the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan panned out before the final Soviet troops withdrew in February 1989. The focus has been the military and political actions directly linked to Afghanistan, consequently little has been published concentrating on

⁸ D. Kanin, *A Political History of the Olympic Games* (Westview Press, Colorado, 1981). p.145 – 146. Of those teams initially invited by the Soviet Olympic Committee, 65 states did not appear at the Olympic Games, of which 55 can be confirmed as boycotting due to the Afghanistan invasion.

⁹ International Olympic Committee, “The Olympic Charter,” accessed August 19, 2013, http://www.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf.p.31

¹⁰ N.E. Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, The Olympic Boycott and the Cold War* (Cambridge University Press, 2011). p.232 and p.240 The Moscow Olympics had the smallest field of competitors since 1956 – Moscow 1980 Summer Olympics, *Olympic.org - Official website of the Olympic Movement*, <http://www.olympic.org/moscow-1980-summer-olympics>.

¹¹ O.A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). p.4

the sanctions placed upon the Soviet Union because of the invasion.¹² Away from the initial justifications put out by the Soviet leaders, little has appeared about how the Soviet Union represented the invasion to the world via its own media outlets.¹³ Similarly, research into the 1980 Olympic Games, specifically that on the boycott campaign itself and not the actual sporting event, has not considered how the Soviet Union went about condemning the boycott worldwide.¹⁴ Rather, the focus has been on how the USA attempted to lead the campaign. How the Soviet Union defended the invasion of Afghanistan whilst also criticising the Olympic boycott campaign is an area that has not been studied before, despite the light it can shine on the Soviet perspective of international relations. This thesis will address these gaps by examining the variation between the reports used by the Soviet international radio broadcaster, Radio Moscow, in broadcasts to different audiences justifying the occupation of Afghanistan. Thus, it explores how Soviet media differentiated justifications for the invasion and condemnation for the subsequent boycott campaign depending on the audience.

In addition, this thesis, based on research into BBC Monitoring archive material, investigates international radio in a way previous studies that have used *Summary of World Broadcasts* (SWB), or *Daily Digest* (DD) material, have not managed. The material accessed for this study was used by the BBC Monitoring Editorial division to produce the SWB and DD. As it has not been through the editorial process, the material is one step closer to that heard over the airwaves in a multitude of languages during late-1979 and early-1980. This allows for a more in-depth analysis of Soviet broadcasting and the frames they used than would be possible with previously used sources. In doing so, this thesis also demonstrates how this archive could be used for further historical research into the Cold War and radio broadcasting – specifically Soviet broadcasting to listeners within the Soviet Union, the Warsaw Pact states, and many others under a variety of regimes internationally. In addition, the archive contains records of

¹² The most recent [2011] examples being Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*; J. Steele, *Ghosts of Afghanistan: The Haunted Battleground* (Counterpoint, 2011).

¹³ Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980*. does cover this period, although is more focused on the Olympic Games. Also, B. Hazan, *Soviet Propaganda: A Case Study of the Middle East Conflict*, 1976. is a further work in the field of Soviet propaganda. However, away from these two studies the field is limited. Most recently, the ‘Public Relations of the Cold War’ Conference held at the University of Cambridge (December 2011) a paper was presented titled ‘On the events in Afghanistan: Strategies to justify the invasion of Afghanistan to the Soviet public’ (Martin Deuerlein). This was not a consideration of Soviet radio, but an analysis of the Soviet newspaper Pravda.

¹⁴ See Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, The Olympic Boycott and the Cold War*; D.L. Jr. Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan and the 1980 U.S. Boycott* (Praeger Publishers, 1990).

broadcasts covering a range of topics, and so it will look to highlight the usefulness of using radio to explore further topics ranging from politics and war through to sport and everyday life.

1.2 AIMS OF THE THESIS

This thesis sets out to answer the following questions: Firstly, what were the frames used to shape broadcasts made by Radio Moscow? Secondly, did these frames differ by region and if so why did they differ? Thirdly, what methods did Radio Moscow use to create these frames and to incorporate events into existing frameworks?

Several aims arise from these questions, the first of which is to explore the Soviet perception of the world in 1980. This will be achieved by examining the frames used by Radio Moscow to report these events and by exploring any differentiation that occurred between regions and/or states. An important part of effective framing involves analysing the background of the audience and the target state, so this thesis will also examine what Radio Moscow considered important values for target audiences.

The second aim of this thesis is to investigate whether the differentiation of frames fit into the categories outlined by Paulu in his research into how Soviet broadcasting is divided into the following regions:

‘the other socialist countries, North America, Latin America, Western Europe, Near and Middle East, Southeast Asia, the Far East, and Africa.’¹⁵

However, due to the limitations of the primary material, this thesis will not be able to comment on broadcasts to Latin America or the Far East. Despite this, the research will further highlight Radio Moscow’s perception of the Soviet relationship with many parts of the world.

A third aim is to examine whether, in framing the invasion of Afghanistan and the boycott campaign, the Soviet broadcaster attempted to incorporate these events into wider narratives that the audiences were already primed to understand, such as a Cold War narrative, or whether they chose to focus on Afghanistan and the Olympics as isolated events.

Fourthly, this thesis aims to examine what sources Radio Moscow used to support the arguments it put forward. Were they primarily Soviet or foreign sources, or did they vary depending on the target audience? Furthermore, if the latter is the case, this thesis aims to

¹⁵ B. Paulu, “Radio and Television Broadcasting in Eastern Europe” (1974). p.54

understand why. Lastly with regard to this, the thesis explores whether there were elements of deception and lying in the presentation of material used to build-up pro-Soviet frames?

Fifthly, this research aims to investigate the suitability of using The Imperial War Museum's BBC Monitoring Service archive for exploring international radio broadcasting and the Cold War. It will demonstrate how the archive can be used, and highlights any difficulties that may need to be overcome, so that future researchers can make better use of an underused source.

Through answering these questions, this study contributes to our understanding of the Cold War, specifically to the following three strands: Firstly, this thesis will add to histories of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow Olympic Games boycott campaign, in both cases by expanding on the relatively ignored but important area of how the Soviet Union attempted to engage its arguments about both events, directly with foreign and domestic audiences, using shortwave radio. Secondly, this thesis will add to literature on the use of radio for broadcasting messages to foreign peoples, an area in which the main concern has been what was broadcast from West to East over the iron curtain rather than from East to West. Thirdly, through examining the broadcasting between the invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow Olympic Games, this thesis will add to the small field of research concentrating on Soviet radio. Using frame analysis as the basis for the method of research also means that this study will add to literature on the practical applications of that concept, as well as being an addition to the literature on the use of framing in radio broadcasting.

1.3 THESIS STRUCTURE

Chapter 2 explores the historical context that this thesis sits in. Chapter 3 then discusses the BBC Monitoring Service archive, the key concept of frame analysis, how the two can be used to explore Soviet broadcasting in 1980, and presents the reasons behind the selection of the six case studies that make up the bulk of the research. These six key moments are outlined below.

Chapter 4 explores the immediate portrayal of the invasion and the justifications that Radio Moscow broadcast in defence of Soviet actions. It highlights the frames used by Radio Moscow in the initial days after the invasion, and how they began to alter in the face of condemnation from states, regional bodies, and the United Nations. Chapter 5 examines how these frames developed as the world reaction became more forceful. It concentrates on analysing Radio Moscow broadcasts surrounding President Carter's State of the Union address, significant not only for its reaffirmation of trade sanctions on the Soviet Union, but because it provided powerful messages regarding the Persian Gulf and the Moscow Olympic Games. Chapter 6

examines how Radio Moscow framed the trips made in February by members of President Carter's boycott team in their attempts to build support for a boycott. It contrasts Muhammad Ali's trip to Africa and Cyrus Vance's visit to the Lake Placid Winter Olympics, alongside how Radio Moscow compared the problems of Lake Placid with the expected perfection of Moscow to show how the broadcaster was adept at manipulating similar events in a manner that projected positively on the Soviet Union. Chapter 7 concentrates on how Radio Moscow framed President Carter's announcement that the US Olympic team would not be going to Moscow. This was the first real blow to the Games, changing what had previously been discussion and strong words into action. Not only did this affect how Radio Moscow framed the boycott campaign from this moment on, but it led to a spate of announcements, for and against, from numerous states around the world. Afghanistan, it seems, was not the primary news story anymore, the spin-off Olympic boycott was. Chapter 8 examines how Radio Moscow framed the International Olympic Committee announcement in May 1980 that only 81 teams would attend the Olympic Games – that the boycott had an effect. It was a significant time as the boycott was no longer just a threat, it was a reality that Radio Moscow had to deal with. Chapter 9 concentrates on the opening ceremony of the Games and how Radio Moscow framed the effects of the boycott on the Olympic Games. Television images of the opening ceremony did their utmost to hide the extent of the boycott with clever photography and panning of the stadium.¹⁶ Radio Moscow addressed the boycott however, using not just the opening ceremony but the results, records, and athletes themselves, to emphasise just how badly the boycott had failed – Afghanistan was barely mentioned, with the exception of its Olympic team.

Chapter 10 concludes this thesis, bringing together the analysis from each of the case studies and discussing how the frames used by Soviet radio varied over time and by region, and how this can inform on the Soviet perspective of international relations at the time. It evaluates the BBC Monitoring Service material stored at Duxford, commenting on the usefulness of using both translated and transcribed material for studying international radio broadcasting, and specifically for an examination of frame analysis.

¹⁶ Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, The Olympic Boycott and the Cold War*. p.232

CHAPTER 2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This chapter explores the context in which this work sits. It begins with a brief history of shortwave radio broadcasting during the Cold War, before moving on to discuss where this thesis sits in relation to previous research into Cold War radio broadcasting, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and previous studies of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games boycott.

2.1 SHORTWAVE RADIO BROADCASTING AND THE COLD WAR

The Voice of America (VOA), the BBC, Deutsche Welle, Radio Free Europe (RFE), Radio Liberty (RL), Radio Moscow, Radio Peace & Progress, and many more; these were all major tools of public diplomacy during the Cold War. Using the medium of shortwave, which allows for a broadcast from one place to reach thousands of miles around the world, they gave states the opportunity to broadcast messages, both good and bad, directly to foreign peoples, in the process bypassing local governments, local media, and local laws. The effect radio had on the Cold War is debatable, and whether or not the constant battle to provide information sustained or reduced tensions is open to interpretation, but there are certainly examples of it both helping and hindering peaceful co-existence. Rawnsley has argued that,

‘Radio propaganda certainly helped to sustain [the Cold War] as an endemic state by perpetuating tensions, attitudes and predispositions, and there is evidence of this, one example being the case of Radio Free Europe (RFE) broadcasts arguably inciting and encouraging the Hungarian uprising in 1956.’¹⁷

However, by supplying information and up-to-date news, radio can also be considered to have helped lower tensions and bring about changing attitudes. One line of argument, countering the call that RFE encouraged uprising, is that without Western radio broadcasting calling for restraint, the revolutions of 1956 would have in fact been bloodier.¹⁸ The use of radio during the Cuban Missile Crisis is a further example of its importance as a means to lessen tensions – the open-letter diplomacy used by Khrushchev and Kennedy over the radio waves may have been somewhat frightening to hear, but at least it was out in the open and not behind closed doors that

¹⁷ Rawnsley, *Radio Diplomacy and Propaganda*. P.8, P.166 and Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. Chapter 5 covers this in great detail.

¹⁸ Statement quoted in Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. P.XVI

the fate of the world appeared to be decided.¹⁹ Rawnsley himself has described this as ‘the most dramatic example of international radio being used as a tool of diplomacy’²⁰ Without the constant barrage of information flying from West to East and leading to a questioning of the Soviet regime, whether just peacefully remaining inside the mind of the listener or giving encouragement to uprising, who is to say what would have happened? International radio broadcasting can equally be said to have broken down the barriers between East and West that may have existed in people’s minds – breaking down cultural barriers, or trying to build them up, is certainly one reason why state broadcasting to foreign regions exists to this day.²¹ The Radio Moscow broadcasts examined in this study are the Soviet Union attempts to engage directly with foreign peoples and project their world view, to directly justify their invasion of Afghanistan and condemn the US-led Olympic boycott campaign. Previous research has examined the boycott campaign and the Afghanistan invasion – but none has considered the constant daily justification and condemnation that Radio Moscow beamed directly into the houses of people around the world via shortwave radio.

Shortwave broadcasts can travel thousands of miles, making them a great medium for conducting an information invasion behind enemy lines. The ability to travel without consideration of borders, governments or iron curtains was, and still is, excellent for getting messages to people who might otherwise remain inaccessible. Cummings quotes one of the first scripts from RFE, in July 1950, containing the lines, ‘You are not forgotten’, and ‘To you, chained by tyranny, we will bring a consistent, reliable well of information.’²² Radio stations such as Voice of America, the BBC and Radio Free Europe verbally jostled with Radio Moscow to project their versions of facts and information, all with the aim of bypassing governments and domestic media sources in an attempt to win the hearts and minds of people in different parts of the world. Television and newspapers could not hope to have the same reach – radio can be immediate, broadcast over shortwave it was (and is) capable of far outstripping other news media in terms of reach (except perhaps satellite systems which were not

¹⁹ Rawnsley, *Radio Diplomacy and Propaganda*. p.110-119.

²⁰ Rawnsley, *Radio Diplomacy and Propaganda*. p.175

²¹ The Voice of America broadcasts in 43 languages. “Voice of America,” accessed September 11, 2013, <http://www.bbg.gov/broadcasters/voa/>. The BBC World Service broadcasts in 32 languages (including English), “BBC World Service” (British Broadcasting Corporation), accessed September 11, 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/languages/index.shtml?survey=no&url=www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/languages/index.shtml&js=no&lang=11>. Voice of Russia (formally Radio Moscow) currently broadcasts in 38 languages to 160 nations. “Voice of Russia,” accessed September 11, 2013, <http://voiceofrussia.com/about/>.

²² R.H. Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989* (McFarland & Co Inc, 2009). p.10

commonplace in 1980). Only with extreme weather conditions can television or higher quality radio waves, such as FM, even come close to matching the distance shortwave can cover.²³ It was also safe for the employees of the broadcaster, with a few notable exceptions such as the murder of the BBC and RFE broadcaster Georgei Markov, the Bulgarian dissident shot in spy-thriller style by a ricin pellet fired from an umbrella gun on Waterloo Bridge in 1978, and the 1981 bombing of the RFE headquarters by Carlos the Jackal under orders from Romanian President Ceausescu.²⁴ Newspapers require a localised distribution network – clearly a danger if critical of an unaccommodating regime – and the same material can easily be broadcast over a radio anyway. Shortwave radio receivers were also readily available in many regions of the world, and many states used shortwave for their own internal means of communication.²⁵

For the broadcasting state shortwave had the safety of distance, for the receiving state it was difficult to prevent, and for receiving listeners it was easy to hide – just retune the radio. Within the Soviet Union there were attempts to control access to shortwave through means such as restricting the tuning mechanisms to only acceptable stations, but this merely boosted the black market in shortwave radios – either adjusting them to reach forbidden bands or supplying ones that could.²⁶ Shortwave broadcasting was, and still is, a highly useful way for governments to communicate directly with foreign peoples, especially those viewed as living in war-torn or oppressive regions or states.

2.2 COLD WAR RADIO

Thousands of hours of shortwave broadcasting could be heard in a variety of languages each week during the Cold War, with the Soviet Union and the United States contributing the majority of this material. In comparison to the 1900 hours a week in 70 languages that the Soviet Union could produce by 1972, the USA broadcast over 2000 hours a week in 49 languages – it would appear that the USA devoted more time to each language than the USSR.²⁷ Along with broadcasting in the most languages, the Soviet Union was also the largest proponent

²³ For more detail on the technical aspects of shortwave broadcasting see R.E. Parta, *Discovering the Hidden Listener* (Hoover Institution Press, 2007), p.55-62

²⁴ Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. p.99, p.153-157, and p.170-171.

²⁵ Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*. p.58; R.S. Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics* (Praeger, 1994). p.18, 56

²⁶ Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. p.65

²⁷ Paulu, “Radio and Television Broadcasting in Eastern Europe.” p.205-6

of radio ‘jamming’ – attempting to block incoming signals through a range of techniques such as signal interference or signal override.²⁸ There were also general threats and reprisals against those who did manage to listen through the jamming.²⁹ The Soviet Union was thought to have spent more on trying to jam Western radio broadcasts than was spent by the West producing and sending them, spending the equivalent of around \$150 million a year, with one estimate suggesting a peak of around \$900 million per annum.³⁰ To compare these costs, Nelson cites one study that estimates the cost incurred by the Soviet Union in jamming the BBC for four days was comparable to the costs the BBC incurred in broadcasting a Russian service for a whole year.³¹

The Soviet leaders considered ‘Western radio propaganda in the Russian language... part of a premeditated imperialist bourgeois psychological war against the USSR and socialist countries.’³² Yet, with 1900 hours output a week, shortwave radio was evidently an important tool of Soviet propaganda as well. However, Soviet media often reported news many days after the Western broadcasters, as it needed to fit with Soviet policy before it could be broadcast. The best example of this is the Chernobyl disaster – Soviet radio failed to report the explosion for at least two days, so for many the first source of information, safety advice, and presumably opinion on the causes, came from foreign broadcasters.³³ The Soviet Union may have broadcast in more languages than any of its competitors, but delays caused by the need to fit information to state directives meant it often lost out in the race to report first, and therefore Soviet radio often lost the opportunity to be first to provide listeners with an interpretation of events.

With the exception of a study by Smith published in 1970, and Mikkonen’s recent 2013 chapter, previous studies of radio broadcasting have tended to focus upon Cold War radio broadcasts from the USA and Western Europe into the Warsaw Pact states, looking predominantly at key

²⁸ A. Ross Johnson, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty - The CIA Years and Beyond* (Stanford University, 2010). p.185

²⁹ Ross Johnson, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty - The CIA Years and Beyond*. p.185

³⁰ K.R.M. Short, *Western Broadcasting over the Iron Curtain*, *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-), vol. 63, 1986. p.6, Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*. p.27

³¹ Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. p.24

³² Excerpt from a review of foreign radio tactics by the USSR State Television and Radio Guidance Department, Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*. p.415

³³ Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*, p.96, cites a Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research RFE/RL study, which found that 36% of those interviewed first found out about the incident from foreign radio, 28% via Soviet TV and 15% by word of mouth.

uprisings, such as Hungary 1956.³⁴ The most recent research on Cold War radio has continued this approach – Ross Johnson has produced two works both focusing on Western broadcasting, and in particular Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, and Voice of America.³⁵ Of particular note are two quotations from Parta in Ross Johnson’s edited collection, about Soviet attitudes to the Afghanistan war and the impact of external radio broadcasters –

‘In 1988, a trend report tracing the evolution of attitudes toward the war, and the role that Western radio played in informing Soviet listeners (based on 6,059 data cases), showed that disapproval of the war had risen from one-quarter of the population in 1984 to almost half in 1987... In the early years of the war, respondents tended either to minimise its importance and avoid expressing a viewpoint, or to recite stereotyped responses based on domestic Soviet propaganda. It was only after several years of involvement in Afghanistan that clearly-defined attitudes toward the war began to be expressed by a majority of respondents in the traveller survey.’³⁶

‘When attitudes toward the war were correlated with information sources in the war, it became apparent that those who received their information from Western radio or via word-of-mouth communication were considerably more critical of Soviet policy than those who relied on official sources.’³⁷

Comments such as these do not appear with regard to the effects of broadcasts originating from the Soviet Union, both because of the focus on Western broadcasting, and because, as Nelson claimed, when himself writing about Western broadcasting, ‘the Communists had few

³⁴ Smith, “Some Effects of Radio Moscow’s North American Broadcasts.” Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*; A.L. Heil Jr., *Voice of America: A History*, *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, vol. 38, 2006; Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*; Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*; Ross Johnson, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty - The CIA Years and Beyond*. Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989*. The study of Soviet radio broadcasting that appears to be an exception is Smith, “Some Effects of Radio Moscow’s North American Broadcasts.”

³⁵ Ross Johnson, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty - The CIA Years and Beyond*; Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*.

³⁶ R. Eugene Parta, “The Audience to Western Broadcasts to the USSR during the Cold War: An External Perspective,” in *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*, 2010. p.89

³⁷ Eugene Parta, “The Audience to Western Broadcasts to the USSR during the Cold War: An External Perspective.”p.90

listeners.³⁸ Whilst this may be true – there is little evidence to contradict the statement, but also little to support it – it does not detract from the importance of studying the messages that the Soviet Union were attempting to communicate to foreign peoples all around the world.

Unlike Nelson, the British government were concerned that there were in fact many listeners, as one mid-1960s BBC survey into the listening habits of ages 15+ found roughly 2% of the British population had listened to Radio Moscow at one time or another – almost one million people!³⁹ This was deemed to be ‘an oddity from the BBC’ and ‘a damned fool figure’, but the important point was made that,

‘The key words seem to be ‘at one time or another’. What we need but cannot get are statistics on those who listen to Moscow regularly enough to be fairly sure to assimilate the Communist propaganda line on any major issue.’⁴⁰

Evidently there was enough concern in the British Foreign Office to merit investigation into how many regular listeners there were, regardless of how outrageous the number seemed – one comment even questioned the methodology used to produce such a seemingly high number, and whether the same method was potentially inflating BBC external service audience numbers.⁴¹

As with overviews of Cold War broadcasting, English language works, examining specific broadcasters focus almost exclusively on western broadcasters, and within these again primarily on RFE and VOA, rather than the BBC.⁴² Very little has yet been produced examining Radio Moscow specifically and nothing has appeared, in the English language, considering the impact of the Soviet trade unions broadcaster Radio Peace & Progress. There are several reasons why this is the case, the main one being the difficulty in gathering detailed material of what was broadcast from the Soviet Union – something the BBC Monitoring archive can rectify. In addition, whilst the Soviet Union continued to throw money at international broadcasting, VOA, RFE, RL and the BBC constantly needed to justify their outputs – were they effective, was

³⁸ Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. p.xvi

³⁹ TNA/FCO/95/355/1 ‘Broadcasting Moscow Radio English Programmes’

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Two examples being Ross Johnson, *Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty - The CIA Years and Beyond*; Heil Jr., *Voice of America: A History*. Works on the BBC include: Briggs, *The BBC: The First Fifty Years*. – this incorporates monitoring and international broadcasting, rather than focuses on it. For focused attention see Alban Webb, “Cold War Radio and the Hungarian Uprising, 1956,” *Cold War History* 13, no. 2 (2013): 221–238; Patrick Major, “Listening behind the Curtain: BBC Broadcasting to East Germany and Its Cold War Echo,” *Cold War History* 13, no. 2 (May 2013): 255–275, doi:10.1080/14682745.2012.746840.

anyone listening? These questions led to audience studies that, although very rough and basic, have been used as proof that broadcasting east was worthwhile.⁴³ Demonstrating the difficulties of this research, the BBC Written Archives Centre holds several letters regarding Russian audience research – one writer wrote, ‘I can assure you that the BBC is listened to, respected, and indeed used as the ultimate source of reliable information by most educated people.’⁴⁴ Another said that the BBC news was part of the Soviet persons’ ‘life’s blood... Millions do depend on them.’⁴⁵ Alongside interviewing defectors and visitors, this was the type of information used to understand audience numbers and make-up. It is not clear whether the reverse took place. Whilst Radio Moscow regularly asked listeners to write in, and, as with most radio stations, tried to judge the audience through the size of the mailbag, information on audience figures has not been reported.

Knowing the audience for a radio station is key to framing news stories, as will be explained in the methodology section, but knowing the precise listening figures for shortwave broadcasting seems impossible. Radio Moscow was a vast enterprise, a seemingly ‘money-no-object’ station broadcasting out Soviet views. The framing of reporting to appeal to different groups may have been based on the letters sent in by listeners, but ultimately, like the audience figures, they will have been based on estimations – estimations about the background of the target audience, the current and residual political and economic climates, the current actions of the Soviet Union and the United States, and what the enemy was broadcasting to the same target audiences. Assessing the audience, as well as estimating its size, was by no means a perfect science.⁴⁶

Alongside a lack of research into listeners, Western governments did not ban listening or try to ‘jam’ frequencies in the same manner as the Soviet Union. It would seem there was less concern, from both sides of the iron curtain, about broadcasts heading out of the USSR than those heading in. In terms of broadcast material, audience estimates and administrative papers, there is far more information available about the broadcasts that went east over the iron curtain than those that went west. However, Nelson raises an interesting point related to this that this thesis aims to dispel –

⁴³ For estimates of listening figures and percentages see Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*. Chapters 5-6

⁴⁴ WAC/E42/598/1 BBC Russian Service Audience Research 1979

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ G. Mytton, “Audience Research for Shortwave Broadcasts,” *Soundscape* December (2000): 9.G. Mytton and C. Forrester, “Audiences for International Radio Broadcasts,” *European Journal of Communication* 3, no. 4 (1988): 457.

*‘Literature on the Radios is surprisingly deficient in conveying what material they were actually transmitting. Apparently the Radios retained few materials in archives. One RFE/RL executive said, “We were not prepared to retain back files just in case some academic researcher turned up.”’*⁴⁷

This may well be the reason why there are few studies that actually fully quote radio broadcasts, even from broadcasts originating from RFE, VOA or the BBC. When radio broadcasts are cited it is predominantly through the digests of monitoring services such as FBIS and the BBC Monitoring Service. However, even these lack the level of detail into what was transmitted that can be found in the Duxford BBC Monitoring Archive, discussed in chapter 3.1.

There have been few academic studies of Soviet radio broadcasting, with limited studies of the different broadcasts and over limited periods of time. Of these, Bookmiller’s study of the history of Radio Moscow, along with the BBC and the Voice of America, is an insightful analysis of the thinking behind Soviet broadcasting.⁴⁸ She concluded that Radio Moscow remained true to its original purpose, promoting ‘the virtues of the world’s first communist state, discrediting leading capitalist powers and [pressurising] other socialist countries which deviated from Moscow’s ideological course...’, but the intimate link between radio and state meant that it had to prop-up the Soviet Union for its own survival.⁴⁹ Therefore regardless of what the Soviet Union did and how this may negatively affect an audience opinion, Radio Moscow needed to accentuate as many positives as possible to justify not only the existence and mission of the state, but also the existence and mission of the state broadcaster.

A study into how Radio Moscow output was perceived by the North American public was conducted by Smith in the 1960s, and found that listeners had been led to believe by the domestic press that the Soviet broadcaster would be far more propagandistic in tone than it actually was.⁵⁰ Another example of research into Soviet broadcasting, Robert Fortner’s ‘*Public Diplomacy and International Politics*’, examined both US and Soviet broadcasting with regard to the superpower summits in the late 1980s.⁵¹ It also used frame analysis techniques, although rather more statistically than will be used here, to ‘...compare and contrast the nature of the

⁴⁷ Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. p.53

⁴⁸ K.N. Bookmiller, “The War of Words Without the War,” *PhD Thesis* (University of Virginia, 1992). For Soviet broadcasting, see Chapter 4, ‘Launching the Big Loudspeaker’.

⁴⁹ Bookmiller, “The War of Words Without the War.” p.158

⁵⁰ Smith, “Some Effects of Radio Moscow’s North American Broadcasts.” p.539

⁵¹ Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics*; R.S. Fortner, “Analysis of Voice of America Broadcasts to the Middle East during the Persian Gulf War Crisis,” *The Center for Strategic and International Studies* May (1991).

reporting that characterised the broadcasts of the services.⁵² Fortner's work is unique in that it is also the only work that uses transcripts of Soviet radio to examine the messages broadcast, rather than just the overall themes, and considers how these messages evolved in the period under study. A more recent analysis of Radio Moscow has been undertaken by Simo Mikkonen, who highlights the lack of research into Soviet broadcasting whilst providing a general overview of Soviet broadcasting development in the 1950s and 1960s.⁵³ Away from these studies, information and research into Radio Moscow broadcasting is rare, and Radio Peace & Progress almost non-existent.

One of the aims of this thesis is to analyse the messages and themes broadcast by Radio Moscow, in the process not only expanding knowledge about Soviet radio messages during the Olympic boycott campaign, but also expanding understanding about how the Soviet radio broadcaster altered those messages to different audiences. Using the BBC Monitoring Service transcripts, this thesis studies Soviet radio broadcasts in more detail than any previous research, analysing how the radio broadcaster attempted to influence global opinion against the boycott whilst continuing normal lines of attack against the USA, Britain and anyone else they deemed a target. In 1950, President Eisenhower broadcast to the American people that Soviet Union radio broadcasting was 'weaving a fantastic pattern of lies and twisted facts.'⁵⁴ Using the Soviet reporting of the invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow Olympic Games boycott, this study will investigate how twisted the facts and how 'fantastical' the pattern of lies broadcast by Radio Moscow actually were.

2.3 THE COLD WAR AND THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

*'The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was one of the three most significant conflicts of the Cold War era, the others being the Korean War in the 1950s and the wars in Indochina and Vietnam from 1945 to 1975... It was also the only Cold War conflict in which the Soviet forces were directly engaged in full-scale combat outside – or at best on the periphery of – what was generally acknowledged to be the Soviet sphere of interest. The impact of Afghanistan upon the Soviet Union, its armed forces – the army in particular – and the outcome of the Cold War was significant.'*⁵⁵

⁵² Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics.*, p.6

⁵³ Mikkonen, "To Control the World's Information Flows - Soviet Cold War Broadcasting."

⁵⁴ Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989.* p.20

⁵⁵ D. Stone, *Wars of the Cold War* (Brassey's UK Ltd, 2004). p.250

Despite these assertions by Stone, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has not gained the attention of the US equivalent, Vietnam. As Cold War ‘grand narrative’ histories tend to focus upon superpower relations over nearly 50 years, the specifics of individual confrontations and key moments can get lost within the overall story. For both the Afghanistan invasion and the Olympic boycott campaign, this is arguably the case.

The Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan was indeed fateful, and whilst it was not the sole reason for the collapse of the Soviet Union twelve years later, the drain on resources and the inability to subdue the Afghan people played a significant part.⁵⁶ Whilst Stone may argue that it was one of the three most significant Cold War conflicts, and Gaddis agrees, for many, other events take precedence.⁵⁷ Despite being in Afghanistan for almost a decade, nearly a quarter of the Cold War, the Soviet suppression of uprisings in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) have had more analysis across the fields of International Relations, Soviet studies and even radio broadcasting studies. Furthermore, the two-weeks of the Cuban missile crisis (1962) are ‘universally recognised now as the closest the world came, during the second half of the 20th century, to a third world war...’.⁵⁸ The invasion of Afghanistan, and the subsequent world reaction to it, has been left behind, despite President Carter asserting at the time that it was ‘...the most serious threat to the peace since the Second World War.’⁵⁹ There are definite parallels between Afghanistan and the suppressions of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the forceful US reaction to the Cuban missiles, and, most significantly of all, the long drain of the Vietnam War.⁶⁰ Far from being of less significance, Afghanistan was in many ways a quintessential Cold War conflict, and as Gaddis makes clear, it was one of only three occasions when a superpower went to war.⁶¹

The Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan has been described as a ‘...disastrous intervention...’, ‘...an ultimate show of misjudgement...’, and ‘by far the most striking use of

⁵⁶ J.L. Gaddis, *The Cold War* (London: Penguin, 2007). p.257

⁵⁷ Gaddis argues that the frequent hot wars between great powers before 1945 became ‘limited to those between superpowers and smaller powers, as in Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan, or to wars among smaller powers like the four Israel and its Arab neighbours fought between 1948 and 1973.’ Gaddis, *The Cold War*. p.261

⁵⁸ Gaddis, *The Cold War*. p.78

⁵⁹ J. Carter, “The State of the Union address, 23rd January 1980,” *Miller Center, University of Virginia* (Washington D.C., 1980), <http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches/detail/3404>.

⁶⁰ Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter’s National Security Adviser, was quoted that funding the Afghan resistance was an opportunity to give ‘the USSR its Vietnam war’. Quoted in an interview with France newspaper “Les Révélations D’un Ancien Conseiller de Carter: ‘Oui, La CIA Est Entrée En Afghanistan Avant Les Russes.’” *Le Nouvel Observateur*, January 1998.

⁶¹ Gaddis, *The Cold War*. p.261

Soviet military power...’⁶² However, in terms of grand narratives of the Cold War, little has been written about the invasion itself. Instead, there has been analysis of how it affected the Cold War, with the most common conclusions being that Afghanistan shifted President Carter’s outlook, something the President himself has acknowledged, and that it was a symbol of the end of détente.⁶³ The Olympic boycott campaign highlighted the dynamics of international political relations in a way that few other crises during the Cold War years managed, yet it gains even less mention than Afghanistan, suggesting that for many researchers, in terms of implications for the Cold War, it had if anything only a minimal effect, despite the assertions of President Carter.⁶⁴

There are a number of specific studies on the Soviet war in Afghanistan, ranging from studies of the on-going conflict, such as Arnold’s 1981 *‘Afghanistan, The Soviet Invasion in Perspective’*, to post-conflict studies, such as Braithwaite’s 2011 *‘Afgantsy’*.⁶⁵ Works have also appeared from the perspectives of Soviet soldiers and journalists (Tamarov and Bocharov) and those comparing Afghanistan with Vietnam (Borer) and the 2001- US-led war in Afghanistan (Steele).⁶⁶ Whatever the perspective of the research, the main concern has been documenting the military engagement, how the occupation panned out, and (in later books) the reasons for its

⁶² Y. Ferguson and R. Koslowski, ‘Culture, International Relations Theory, and Cold War History’, p.157, and J.M. Hanhimaki, ‘Ironies of Turning Points: Détente in Perspective’, p.329, both in O.A. Westad, *Reviewing the Cold War: Approaches, Interpretations, Theory* (Routledge, 2000).; S. Ball, *The Cold War: An International History, 1947-1991* (Bloomsbury Academic, 1997). p.184

⁶³ On Carter’s change of course - J. Dunbabin, *The Cold War: The Great Powers and Their Allies* (Longman, 2007). p.396; Ball, *The Cold War: An International History, 1947-1991*. p.185; on both détente and Carter – Gaddis, *The Cold War*. p.211. In J. Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (University of Arkansas Press, 1995). Carter wrote about the ‘life and death issues’ he was grappling with in January 1980 (p.486), and how it affected his political campaigning (p.483). In Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*. (p.112) he is also quoted as telling an aide ‘Because of the way that I’ve handled Iran, they think I don’t have the guts to do anything. You’re going to be amazed at how tough I am going to be.’ [From Time Magazine, ‘Grain Becomes a Weapon’, 21st January 1980].

⁶⁴ Dunbabin, *The Cold War: The Great Powers and Their Allies*. mentions the 1980 boycott only once, and does not consider the sport in any other context, p.211; Gaddis, *The Cold War*. mentions it in passing when summarising the implications of the Afghanistan invasion, p.332

⁶⁵ Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*; A. Arnold, *Afghanistan, The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (Stanford University, 1981). Others include: D. Cordovez and S. Harrison, *Out of Afghanistan* (Oxford University Press, 1995); D. Gibbs, “Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Retrospect,” *International Politics* 37 (2000): 233–246; E. Girardet, *Afghanistan The Soviet War* (Croom Helm, London, 1985); Hammond T., *Red Flag over Afghanistan* (Westview Press, Colorado, 1984); G. Hughes, “The Soviet-Afghan War, 1978-1989: An Overview,” *Defence Studies* 8 (3) (2008): 326–350; A. Hyman, *Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-91* (Macmillan Press Ltd, 1992).

⁶⁶ V. Tamarov, *Afghanistan: A Russian Soldier’s Story* (Ten Speed Press, 2001); E Bocharov, *Russian Roulette The Afghanistan War through Russian Eyes* (Penguin Group, 1990).D. Borer, *Superpowers Defeated, Vietnam and Afghanistan Compared* (Frank Cass Publishers, London, 2004). Steele, *Ghosts of Afghanistan: The Haunted Battleground*.

failure. However, there is either very little or no examination of the international reaction in 1980. In histories of a decade-long conflict, neither the sanctions imposed upon the invader or the boycott of an international sporting event feature substantially. Furthermore, how the Soviet Union justified the occupation and condemned these sanctions has only been considered fleetingly, despite what it can tell us about international relations in 1980, in particular from the perspective of the Soviet Union. By expanding understanding of the international situation during the early months of the conflict, this thesis will add to the existing literature on the invasion of Afghanistan.

Research on Afghanistan has very little analysis of the Olympic boycott campaign, despite it being central to the world reaction. Hammond commented that ‘the punitive measure that probably hurt Soviet pride the most was Carter’s campaign to boycott the Moscow Olympics’, whilst Braithwaite argued that ‘support for the Olympics boycott was more lukewarm ... Soviet policy towards Afghanistan was unaffected ... the Americans and British turned instead to more practical measures.’⁶⁷ The Olympic Games boycott was a substantial part of the official reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan, yet whilst it was central to the reaction to the conflict in 1980, it has not received detailed historical examination.

As early as 1981 Arnold described the reaction to Afghanistan as a ‘storm’, whilst in 1983 Bradsher described the reaction to the invasion as ‘swift and strong’, and by 1986 Collins was describing it as ‘...one of the strongest series of actions ever taken by the US over any specific Soviet act.’⁶⁸ However, these voices are in the minority. In 1985, Girardet argued that ‘...Afghanistan’s predicament... has failed to arouse the righteous indignation, or imagination, of the international community...’, and since then the effects of the sanctions and the Olympic boycott have been overlooked.⁶⁹ In more recent studies of the invasion of Afghanistan, Braithwaite (2011) mentions the sanctions and boycott in passing, and Maley (2009) covers them only briefly.⁷⁰ Studies of Afghan history also lack coverage – Rasanayagam (2003) merely describes ‘...the somewhat lukewarm response...’ to sanctions, and whilst Barfield (2010) acknowledges the mass opposition against the invasion, he does not comment on the reaction to

⁶⁷ Hammond T., *Red Flag over Afghanistan*. p.123; Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*. p.113

⁶⁸ Arnold, *Afghanistan, The Soviet Invasion in Perspective*. p.99; H.S. Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union* (Duke University Press, 1983). p.189; Collins, *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: A Study in the Use of Force in Soviet Foreign Policy*. p.87

⁶⁹ Girardet, *Afghanistan The Soviet War*. p.238-9

⁷⁰ Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*. p.113; W. Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2009). p.65-66

the sanctions, instead preferring to focus on the other strand of US-led policy towards the conflict – funding the mujahideen against the Soviet-backed Afghan government.⁷¹ However, this neglects the fact that until the funding of the mujahideen was formally admitted, the official response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was the economic sanctions, the political resolutions, and the Olympic Games boycott. They may not have affected the war in Afghanistan, but as a reaction at the time they were more significant than current literature on Afghanistan suggests. Official condemnation for the invasion came through political, economic and cultural channels – the only channel remaining to react to the invasion was perhaps publicly proposing military intervention.

Rather than discuss the invasion itself, this study will examine its implications on Soviet relations with the world. This thesis, which aims to investigate how the Soviet Union framed its arguments about Afghanistan and the Olympic boycott to different regions of the world, will show the nature of how the Soviet Union perceived its relationships with other states at the time, and will highlight the varying reasons put forward to justify the occupation. The Soviet Union could not shy away from justifying the invasion of Afghanistan, in part because of the furore over the invasion, but perhaps more so because of the intense debate in some areas over whether to boycott the Olympic Games. They could, and did, absorb or circumvent economic or political reprisals, but international sports stars could not be replaced as easily. Debate dragged on from the invasion in December 1979 until the Moscow Games opened in July 1980, and therefore the reasons behind the boycott constantly needed addressing.

However, whilst the literature on the war in Afghanistan stresses that Soviet justification for the invasion did not waiver, certainly in the first years, what it does not put across is that this justification varied in its specific details depending on the region or state to which they were justifying their actions. Soviet Union broadcasters did not just use the statements by Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev or Afghan President Babrak Karmal when discussing the war, they also used interviews with visitors to Kabul and the Afghan people, as well as favourable reports from foreign media sources in an attempt to justify their actions. Just as previous research has not considered Soviet public diplomacy, literature on the war has not studied radio broadcasts. Whilst material gathered from other Soviet sources, such as the newspapers *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* and the telegraph agency TASS, has been used by authors, Radio Moscow, often

⁷¹ A. Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History* (IB Tauris & Co Ltd, 2003). p.91; Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*. p.235

appearing in citations for quotes by political figures such as Karmal or Brezhnev, has not been analysed in itself.

In his memoir, Soviet journalist Gennady Bocharov, discussed how his newspaper articles on Afghanistan were produced and moderated to fit the official Soviet line.⁷² He explained how Soviet journalists produced their pieces about the Afghanistan war, but not what was actually said in them – articles were ‘edited mercilessly’ by both Glavlit and the military censor.⁷³ With the exception of Bocharov, and Hazan (discussed below in The 1980 Olympic Boycott Campaign), analysis of the Soviet media and the messages it sent out regarding Afghanistan and the boycott campaign have not been studied.

Instead of merely broadcasting pieces about how normal life was in Afghanistan, the long drawn out nature of the boycott campaign kept Afghanistan in the news for considerably longer than it may have been otherwise, even if only as of secondary importance to the Olympics. The sanctions and boycott may not have affected the war, but in terms of highlighting it to a wide audience, they made a more significant difference than studies have previously shown. That Soviet radio, as this thesis will show, devoted a considerable amount of time both rebuffing the boycott calls and justifying the intervention in Afghanistan, often citing foreign press stories, is testament to this.

The majority of English language research on the Soviet war in Afghanistan has been by Western researchers; those produced by Soviet authors tend to be memoirs by soldiers or journalists, such as Bocharov and Tamarov.⁷⁴ The source materials used in many of the English language works are memoirs or interviews, although recently there has been more Soviet archive material appearing. However, whilst using a vast amount of Russian sources for his own work, Rodric Braithwaite acknowledges that ‘there are no systematic or convenient sources for the Soviet war in Afghanistan to compare with those available for the Stalin period and the Great Patriotic War...’.⁷⁵ Not only will this study contribute to understanding of the reaction around the initial stages of the war in Afghanistan, it will also contribute by further examining an underused source in the literature – Soviet radio. Radio broadcasting was an important means

⁷² Bocharov, *Russian Roulette The Afghanistan War through Russian Eyes*. Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980*.

⁷³ Bocharov, *Russian Roulette The Afghanistan War through Russian Eyes*. p.52

⁷⁴ Three examples are: Bocharov, *Russian Roulette The Afghanistan War through Russian Eyes*. O.L. Sarin, *The Afghan Syndrome: The Soviet Union's Vietnam* (Presidio (Novato, CA), 1993); Tamarov, *Afghanistan: A Russian Soldier's Story*.

⁷⁵ Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*. p.382

for the Soviet Union to use in trying to justify their invasion of Afghanistan to different regions of the world, but it has been understudied in previous work on the war.

2.4 THE 1980 OLYMPIC BOYCOTT CAMPAIGN

Relatively few studies exist on the boycott campaign surrounding the Moscow Olympics, and there is only one analysis of the boycott from the Soviet perspective – Barach Hazan’s ‘*Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games*’.⁷⁶ Hazan uses Soviet material from newspapers such as *Pravda* and *Sovetskiy Sport*, speeches and reports from senior Soviet figures, and also some television and radio, and discusses the various themes used to attack the boycott campaign, ranging from the boycott and the law through to the lack of support for the boycott and the argument that sport and politics should be kept separate.⁷⁷ Incorporated within these themes are materials gathered from radio sources, however only very briefly does Hazan discuss ‘differentiation’ of arguments depending on the audience.⁷⁸ He argues that ‘the frequent and refined use of differentiation illustrates the meticulous planning and coordination of the “boycott” counter-campaign...’⁷⁹ Whilst this thesis aims to investigate the different frames the Soviet radio broadcaster used when communicating with audiences around the world, conversely to Hazan, this thesis argues that it was reacting to events as they came about, and that any signs of meticulousness planning have come about from the well-drilled Soviet propaganda machine, one that allowed events to be communicated and simultaneously framed in ways that would appeal to specific audiences – it was not the boycott counter-campaign that was meticulously planned, rather the Radio Moscow system for framing events.

Hazan’s study is very different from other works on the Moscow games, in both concept and resources. He uses material from *TASS* and, briefly, Radio Moscow, but how the radio broadcasts varied between regions and changed over time is not the focus of the analysis, and neither is the Olympic boycott campaign itself. Whilst he comments on differentiations and arguments used by the various means the Soviet Union had at their disposal, Hazan does not analyse the specifics of what was said over the radio waves nor how these specifics varied by audience. The overarching focus of Hazan’s study is on the many different ways the Soviet Union attempted to win the right to host, and then to promote, the Olympics through radio,

⁷⁶ Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980*.

⁷⁷ Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980*. p.161-162. For more analysis of these themes see Chapter 7: The Boycott Counteroffensive.

⁷⁸ Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980*. p.161-163

⁷⁹ Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980*. p.163

television, films, tourism, books and newspapers, quizzes and societies.⁸⁰ However, Hazan is the exception in a field otherwise dominated by analysis of the Olympic boycott campaign focused around the United States and concentrated on the reasons why other states chose to boycott. Of the two most comprehensive studies, Sarantakes' *'Dropping the Torch'* focuses on the failings of Jimmy Carter and his administration, and Hulme's *'The Political Olympics'* provides a narrative of the campaign from a slightly more international perspective, but also concludes that it was an American self-made failure.⁸¹

Hulme and Sarantakes undertake historical studies, but memoirs and more emotive pieces have also been produced on this topic. Christopher Booker's *'The Games War: A Moscow Journal'* is an example of the 1980 Games from the perspective of a British journalist who was there, but covers his personal experiences in Moscow as much as it discusses his opinions on the boycott campaign.⁸² The Caraccioli brothers approached the boycott from a human perspective with a narrative of interviews from United States athletes, who were unable to attend but clearly wanted to go and may have lost their only chance of Olympic glory in the process.⁸³ It lacks the historical and political analysis supplied by Sarantakes and Hulme, but succeeds with the purpose of setting out the US athletes' perspective, and again gives the impression of being very critical of the US Administration. On the opposite end of the spectrum, Lisa Forrest, captain of the Australian swimming team in 1980, tells of the difficulties of training and attending the Games in the face of hostility from government officials and fellow countrymen.⁸⁴ Both books emphasise the human cost (in sport) of the political actions.

In 1980, Soviet radio attempted to emphasise the plight of those denied the chance to attend, and it is interesting to note the criticism Soviet media targeted on the boycott campaign has not disappeared. With the exception of Barton, almost all reviews of the Moscow boycott campaign have been critical of the US-led actions.⁸⁵ Barton commented –

⁸⁰ B Hazan, *Soviet propaganda: a case study of the Middle East conflict*, 1976, See Chapter 6 for descriptions of the instruments employed by the Soviet Union to promote the Games.

⁸¹ Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, The Olympic Boycott and the Cold War*; Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan and the 1980 U.S. Boycott*.

⁸² C. Booker, *The Games War: A Moscow Journal* (Faber and Faber, 1981).

⁸³ J. Caraccioli and T. Caraccioli, *Boycott: Stolen Dreams of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games* (New Chapter Press, 2010).

⁸⁴ L. Forrest, *Boycott* (ABC Books for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 2008).

⁸⁵ L. Barton, "The American Olympic Boycott of 1980: The Amalgam of Diplomacy and Propaganda in Influencing Public Opinion" (Boston University Graduate School, 1983).

*'If nothing else, then President Carter must be credited with having chosen a most appropriate response to the Afghanistan invasion by his choice of a boycott, for this option clearly brought forward little political damage and may have indeed generated some support from those conservative elements which had previously viewed the Administration as generally lethargic towards the USSR.'*⁸⁶

Barton can be defended to some extent as he was writing in 1983, but even so other commentators of the time were far less sanguine about the campaign. Whether these other commentators are reflecting Soviet criticisms from 1980, or whether they merely highlight that Soviet broadcasters reflected foreign opinions, is open to debate. More in keeping with analysis of the Olympic boycott campaign, and with Soviet broadcasting opinion in 1980, Kanin labelled Olympic boycotts in general, '...the most public of sanctions, but also the most peripheral'.⁸⁷ Similarly, Hulme argued that 'of a politically peripheral nature and capable of being utilised with little risk, international sport appeared as an ideal tool of national policy'.⁸⁸ However, he also stated that, 'the failure of Western Europe, with the exception of West Germany, to join the US boycott presented Washington with a serious threat to its already shaky self-confidence and to its world image.'⁸⁹ This followed Allan Guttman's conclusion that it was a,

*'...half-empty American bandwagon, it was clear that Carter's power of persuasion was ineffective except where the government was militarily or economically dependent upon the United States, or where indigenous factors predisposed the regime to express solidarity with the Afghans.'*⁹⁰

Sarantakes goes even further in his criticism of the boycott campaign. Firstly, he labelled the boycott '...an attempt to destroy the Olympic movement', and, secondly, damningly, he claimed 'it was the Olympic boycott, an American action, rather than the invasion of Afghanistan that killed détente...'.⁹¹ This is an interesting deviation from more typical claims, which are exemplified by historians such as Odd Arne Westad who argued that 'by sending its

⁸⁶ Barton, "The American Olympic Boycott of 1980: The Amalgam of Diplomacy and Propaganda in Influencing Public Opinion.", p.126

⁸⁷ Kanin, *A Political History of the Olympic Games*. p.145

⁸⁸ Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan and the 1980 U.S. Boycott*. p.128

⁸⁹ Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan and the 1980 U.S. Boycott*. p.127

⁹⁰ A. Guttman, "The Cold War and the Olympics," *International Journal* 43, 4 (1988): 554–568. p.563

⁹¹ Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, The Olympic Boycott and the Cold War*. p.11, p.13

troops into Afghanistan the Soviet Union had pulled the plug on what remained of the detente process...’.⁹²

The suggestion that the Olympic Games had an effect on the international political situation has its roots in the burgeoning field studying the relationship between sport and politics. Whilst the Olympic Games’ held in Berlin, Munich and Moscow are perhaps the epitome of the collision between the sporting and political realms, there is a wide field of research that incorporates many other national and international events.⁹³ There are two works within this field related closely to this thesis, by Schillinger & Jenswold and Garland & Rowe.⁹⁴ Each analysed media reporting of major sporting events, with Garland & Rowe discussing the anti-foreigner approach of some British newspapers during football’s Euro ’96, and Schillinger & Jenswold comparing how *The Washington Post* and *Pravda* reported the 1976, 1980, and 1984 Olympic Games.⁹⁵ The approach of the latter is interesting as it compares the reporting of the same event to two separate audiences, so despite having a more quantitative method than this study, it has some relevance to the overall approach.

Schillinger & Jenswold’s work is interesting as it cites a statement by a US International Olympic Committee member in 1976, who said, ‘what happens on our stage attracts more attention than what happens in the United Nations.’⁹⁶ This idea is one that was also used against the 1936 Berlin Olympics – according to David Large a boycott would have been ‘a valuable opportunity to undermine the regime’s stature not only in the eyes of the world, but also – and ultimately more importantly – in the eyes of the Germans themselves’.⁹⁷ Certainly, media attention was likely a key reason for the terrorist acts at Munich in 1972, the banning of apartheid South Africa from the Olympic movement from 1968 (and also in many other sports), and the boycott campaign of 1980. Indeed, in February 1980 the United States had the

⁹² O.A. Westad, *The Fall of Detente: Soviet-American Relations During the Carter Years* (Aschehoug AS, 1997). p.24

⁹³ See works by B. Houlihan, *Sport & International Politics* (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994); J. Garland and M. Rowe, “War Minus the Shooting?,” *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 23, no. 1 (1999): 1980; D. Booth, “Hitting Apartheid for Six? The Politics of the South African Sports Boycott,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 3 (2003): 477; L. Allison, *The Politics of Sport* (Manchester University Press ND, 1986).. For sport and politics in the Soviet Union see the following works - J. Riordan, *Sport, Politics, and Communism* (Manchester Univ Pr, 1991); V Peppard and J Riordan, *Playing Politics: Soviet Sport Diplomacy to 1992* (Jai Press Ltd, 1993).

⁹⁴ E. Schillinger and J. Jenswold, “Three Olympiads: A Comparison of Pravda and the Washington Post,” *Journalism Quarterly* 64 (1987): 826–833; Garland and Rowe, “War Minus the Shooting?”.

⁹⁵ Schillinger and Jenswold, “Three Olympiads: A Comparison of Pravda and the Washington Post”; Garland and Rowe, “War Minus the Shooting?”.

⁹⁶ Schillinger and Jenswold, “Three Olympiads: A Comparison of Pravda and the Washington Post.” p.826

⁹⁷ D.C. Large, *Nazi Games, The Olympics of 1936* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007). p.108-9

opportunity to prevent Soviet athletes attending the Lake Placid Olympics, yet chose not to. According to the IOC, forty countries broadcast the 1980 Winter Olympics, dwarfed in comparison to the one hundred and eleven who broadcast the 1980 Summer Olympics (a number presumably reduced because of the boycott as it was less than the 124 who broadcast the 1976 Montreal Games and substantially less than the 156 who broadcast the 1984 Los Angeles Games).⁹⁸ This was not the reason given by the US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, for the peculiarity of allowing the Soviets to visit the US whilst trying to stop US athletes visiting Moscow though -

‘This is not a question of whether a national team should be barred from competing on political grounds... It is whether the Games should be held in a country which is itself committing a serious breach of international peace.’⁹⁹

Contrarily, South African sportsmen were banned from the Olympics on the political grounds of the apartheid policy. The summer Olympic Games was a world stage with huge international audiences, and if the United States wanted to use a sporting event to make a political point, it cannot be faulted for trying to use the Moscow Games – in spite of criticism for the attempt. Rather than adding to the voices of criticism over the boycott campaign, this thesis instead examines the multitude of arguments Radio Moscow used to criticise the attempt, and what lay behind them.

⁹⁸ International Olympic Committee, “Olympic Marketing Fact File 2008,” accessed March 21, 2013, http://www.olympic.org/Documents/marketing_fact_file_en.pdf. p.23

⁹⁹ C. Vance, “Remarks by Mr Cyrus Vance, Lake Placid, February 1980,” *Olympic Review No.149, March 1980*, accessed August 19, 2013, <http://www.la84foundation.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1980/ore149/ORE149j.pdf>.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND CONCEPTS

That the Soviet media presented only one side of the story, effectively telling the audience what to think, is an argument that many Western broadcasters used to justify their own broadcasting into the USSR.¹⁰⁰ Conversely, this is also what Soviet radio argued Western media did – Radio Moscow informed its North American audience that, using the example of Afghanistan,

‘Any reasonable person must realise there are two sides, two views, concerning the Afghan situation. To what extent has the US media given the American public at large the chance to acquaint itself with the other side’s views. You have been given one view, it has been thrust upon you with all the Madison Avenue technique that so efficiently market a product... I don’t want to go into any details concerning the fact that people here are getting the US view, are being informed of who said what, in short they know what the other said even though we too are selective.’¹⁰¹

Stations either side of the Iron Curtain claimed the other distorted facts and twisted the news to suit their own purposes – perhaps Eisenhower’s conclusion that Soviet radio ‘was weaving a fantastic pattern of lies and twisted facts’ was more widely applicable.¹⁰² To twist facts and to weave a fantastic pattern, whether of truth or lies, requires a report to be framed, that is to focus on certain sections of an event above others as a means to promote a particular argument.

This chapter will discuss the methods, concepts and sources used for this research. The first section provides information on the main source of material for this research – the BBC Monitoring Service archive and its place within the output process of the Monitoring Service. It also highlights some issues that can arise when using this material. Following this, the chapter moves on to explain the key conceptual approach used in this study, frame analysis, how it can be used to analyse the broadcasting of the Moscow boycott campaign, and what it can tell us about the wider world in and around 1980. The third part of the chapter explains how frame analysis will be used with the BBC Monitoring material and any issues that need to be

¹⁰⁰ Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. p.ix

¹⁰¹ IWM/SU/C/216/RM N.Am 23rd January 1980, 0030

¹⁰² Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989*. p.20

considered when doing so. The final sections of this chapter will discuss the additional research material used and the structure of the case studies.

3.1 THE BBC MONITORING SERVICE ARCHIVE

The BBC Monitoring Service was set up in 1939 with the intention of listening to and recording foreign radio broadcasts for the purpose of government intelligence.¹⁰³ Alongside this it was also a useful tool for the BBC World Service, created in 1932, as the Monitors could find out what foreign states were broadcasting to audiences the World Service targeted.¹⁰⁴ By 1980 there were an estimated 1.3 billion wireless radios in existence – slightly less than one wireless radio for every three people on earth at the time.¹⁰⁵ This figure does not account for all radios, as it does not count wired receivers that were used in some areas, such as on rural collective farms in the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁶ However, shortwave broadcasting allowed access to potentially huge audiences worldwide, and knowledge of what these potential audiences heard from foreign, possibly enemy, states was considered vital.

The BBC Monitoring Service exists to this day and the emphasis has not changed – ‘to gather news and information, assess forms of propaganda, and report the use of radio as a diplomatic tool.’¹⁰⁷ It is not alone in this, with other states also using monitoring services to listen to the words floating about in the ether. One example is the US FBIS (Foreign Broadcast Information Service), which works with the BBC Monitoring Service sharing information for better efficiency. The Soviet Union also had a monitoring service, set up in 1964, not only listening to foreign radio stations and producing a *Bulletin of Foreign Broadcasting*, but also trying to compile a ‘folder of lies’ that appeared in those broadcasts.¹⁰⁸

As British foreign policy changed so did the focus of the BBC Monitoring Service. The primary nature of the work was to listen to the broadcasts of both ‘enemy’ and friendly states, so in the late 1930s and during the Second World War the focus was on Germany and Italy, whilst during the Cold War the focus was, naturally, on Soviet broadcasting, and to a lesser extent, China.

¹⁰³ A. Briggs, *The BBC: The First Fifty Years* (Oxford University Press, USA, 1986)., B. Rotheray, *A History of BBC Monitoring* (BBC Monitoring, 2010).

¹⁰⁴ Briggs, *The BBC: The First Fifty Years*.

¹⁰⁵ BBC, *Annual Report and Handbook 1982*, 1982. p.50 ‘World radio and television receivers-1980’

¹⁰⁶ G. Sosin, *Sparks of Liberty: Insider’s Memoir of Radio Liberty* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999). p.15

¹⁰⁷ Rotheray, *A History of BBC Monitoring*. p.9

¹⁰⁸ Sosin, *Sparks of Liberty: Insider’s Memoir of Radio Liberty*. p.228

More recently, a statement in the British Parliament in 2004 claimed that the Monitoring Service covered,

‘...150 countries and 100 languages, it tracks more than 3,000 sources in the international media. Selecting and translating material, the unit publishes an average of 1,000 reports daily, giving a comprehensive and well-judged portrayal of events worldwide.’¹⁰⁹

Foreign radio broadcasts to audiences worldwide were listened to, translated (if necessary) and transcribed, and then an editorial team would extract the key points for customer access through *The Daily Digest* and *The Summary of World Broadcasts*. The material accessed for this study, archived at Imperial War Museums Duxford, is the transcribed and, if necessary, translated material used to produce *The Summary of World Broadcasts*. It is the closest that can be got to the original broadcasting without having access to original scripts or recordings. A previous study using this collection, Laura Johnson’s PhD thesis, titled *Establishing Broadcast Monitoring as Open Source Intelligence: The BBC Monitoring Service during the Second World War*, examined the earliest material in the Duxford collection.¹¹⁰ This thesis concentrates on the last months of the material held in the archive, and examines the transcripts of material broadcast by the Soviet international radio broadcaster, Radio Moscow.

The list of languages the Soviet station broadcast in was exhaustive (around 70), and the total output was vast (up to, if not over 1900 hours per week), but they did not broadcast 24 hours a day to all regions (that would require 168 hours per week per language, which with 70 languages totals a potential 11,760 hours).¹¹¹ The outputs per language in 1979/1980 are not known – although Vladimir Pozner, a commentator on the North American service, wrote in his memoirs that ‘the shortwave broadcast to America began at 2am Moscow time and ended at 7am’ – which suggests a nightly five hour broadcast between 6pm-11pm Washington local time (Eastern Time Zone).¹¹²

In 1980 the Monitoring Service listened to, recorded and transcribed Radio Moscow broadcasting to the following locations –

¹⁰⁹ *Hansard*, HC Deb 23 March 2004 vol 419 cc242-8WH BBC Monitoring, Dr Gavin Strang Statement to House of Commons

¹¹⁰ L. Johnson, “Establishing Broadcast Monitoring as Open Source Intelligence: The BBC Monitoring Service during the Second World War,” *PhD Thesis* (King’s College London, 2013).

¹¹¹ For Soviet radio broadcasting statistics see Paulu, “Radio and Television Broadcasting in Eastern Europe.” p.205-6

¹¹² V. Pozner, *Parting with Illusions* (Grafton Books, London, 1990). p.202-3

Language Group	Target Audience
English	North America, Great Britain & Ireland, World Service, Africa, South East Asia.
Russian	Soviet Home Service.
French	Europe, Africa, Algeria.
Western European	Spain, Italy, Portugal.
Eastern European	Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Croatia.
Other (including Arabic)	Persia, Afghanistan, Africa, Turkey.

This was by no means the complete output of Radio Moscow – it lacks any broadcasts FBIS recorded – but the list does showcase the breadth of coverage by the BBC Monitoring Service. The list also shows the focus of BBC Monitoring at the time – Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Interestingly, these sections also correlate with Paulu’s subdivisions.¹¹³

From the quantity of material available, it would appear that the BBC Monitoring Service devoted significantly more resources to the English language North America and Britain & Ireland services, the English language World Service, the Soviet Home service, and the Arabic language service. Transcripts of these broadcasts make up the bulk of the archive material, and each has several news bulletins and various other features recorded daily. The quantity of material is lower for other languages and regions - some languages have only one recorded bulletin per day, others even less. This may be because Soviet radio devoted less time to these regions, but it can also be attributed to Radio Moscow reusing segments of its broadcasts for different regions – the Monitoring Service was integrated so that these were merely noted rather than re-transcribed, although any changes were noted. This reduced the physical space needed to record the information and thus can give the impression that Radio Moscow broadcasting was skewed towards certain regions, when in fact that was not necessarily the case.

The sheer enormity of Soviet output required considerable devotion of time and resources if it was to be accurately recorded, translated and transcribed. In the BBC Monitoring Service’s *The Monitor’s Handbook* there is a list, called ‘Mandatory Textings’, which defined what was deemed important and needed to be transcribed verbatim. Apart from this, what to transcribe

¹¹³ Paulu, “Radio and Television Broadcasting in Eastern Europe.” p.54

and how to transcribe became the consideration of the monitors and editors, the major consideration being the requirements of key consumers.¹¹⁴ The *Editor's Handbook* records these consisted of BBC services, especially the external services (such as the World Service), government departments at home and abroad, the daily and periodical press, foreign embassies, research workers, the UN, copyright libraries, and the Houses of Commons and Lords.¹¹⁵ As regards notation practice for transcriptions, *The Monitor's Handbook* stated,

*'Monitors must be able, if necessary, to produce a clear and accurate picture of the contents of bulletins without recourse to recordings. The recorder must be regarded only as an aid to and not a substitute for listening. Bulletins must always be taken "live", and only for good operational reasons are monitors permitted to have recordings made for them.'*¹¹⁶

How to record was also noted in *The Monitor's Handbook*, and there were several formats used to record radio broadcasts - 'text', 'text excerpt', 'summary' and 'slug'.¹¹⁷ These formats were on a sliding scale from full transcription - 'text' - through to just acknowledgement that there was a report on a topic - a 'slug'. 'Text excerpt', as would be expected, describes an excerpt from the broadcast, a key passage worthy of note and considered necessary for others to see. A 'summary' was a simple summing up, in the monitor's words, of what the broadcast said.

There was a fifth notation format, the 'monitor's report'. This was slightly separate, in that it differed from these by virtue of being a descriptive account of a broadcast, not what was said (as in a summary) but how it was said, or where it was said. Another part of the *Monitor's Handbook* states the 'Monitor's Note' '...must always be based on fact and not on personal opinion or unsupported impressions'.¹¹⁸ Three points were made clear about using these notes, they should;

- a. 'provide background information on passages in the transmission',
- b. 'provide information on the delivery of the transmission as a whole or a particular passage... or in the case of an Outside Broadcast, report applause, booing, whistling, hecklers' voices etc.'

¹¹⁴ WAC/E8/122/1 BBC Monitoring Service, *Monitor's Handbook* (BBC Written Archives Centre, n.d.). Section C.

¹¹⁵ WAC/E8/121/1BBC Monitoring Service, *Editor's Handbook* (BBC Written Archives Centre, n.d.).Section A., p.1

¹¹⁶ WAC/E8/122/1 BBC Monitoring Service, *Monitor's Handbook*. Section D, p.1

¹¹⁷ WAC/E8/122/1BBC Monitoring Service, *Monitor's Handbook*. Section C, p.9

¹¹⁸ Ibid

- c. ‘provide information on technical aspects such as audibility, presentation’, or ‘deviation from the normal pattern’.¹¹⁹

It was made clear to a monitor that ‘(i) users of their transcripts will not have heard the broadcast... and (ii) that they [the monitor] probably know more about the background of the material than most consumers...’.¹²⁰ Therefore a ‘Monitor’s Report’ or ‘Monitor’s Note’ could be very useful in setting the context for other, less informed, users.

With the exception of ‘Mandatory textings’, monitors had the difficult job of having to judge the importance of a piece of reporting and also having to judge the necessity of providing background information, information that it was vital to provide in a way that did not alter how a transcript may have been interpreted. *The Monitor’s Handbook* provided detail on what was necessary to transcribe and how to transcribe it in the most effective manner – it also made clear how to note down repetition and cross-referencing, to help avoid supplying editors with many repeats of the same report.¹²¹ This is an important point with regard to the make-up of the Duxford BBC Monitoring collection; because of monitors noting repetition, the quantity of material available for some broadcasts can be misleading, and at first glance can lead to a skewed opinion of how much material was actually transcribed in each language broadcast.

From the material accessed it can be seen that BBC Monitoring noted reporting primarily from Radio Moscow’s Home and World Services, as these were the two services most regularly referenced in other broadcasts (and also make up the largest volume of language transcripts in the collection). Material from the Home service was most often noted as repeated on the airwaves to areas such as Eastern Europe and Asia. The English language World Service seems to have been the primary source for material in other English language and Western European broadcasts. However, there was also repetition between other Radio Moscow services – this can give the impression that Radio Moscow concentrated its broadcasting on the Home and World Services to the detriment of others, but is not necessarily the case.¹²²

Additionally, the Monitoring Service also recorded English and Russian language material from the Soviet wire service, TASS (Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union). TASS, under the old name of the *Petrograd Telegraph Agency*, had become a part of the Soviet system within weeks

¹¹⁹ WAC/E8/122/1BBC Monitoring Service, *Monitor’s Handbook*. Section C, p.9

¹²⁰ Ibid

¹²¹ WAC/E8/122/1BBC Monitoring Service, *Monitor’s Handbook*. Section C, p.15

¹²² The actual broadcast levels for Radio Moscow’s different regional broadcasts could not be located during this research.

of the Bolshevik revolution.¹²³ Renamed *TASS* in 1925, it had the ‘exclusive right to gather and distribute information outside the Soviet Union, as well as the right to distribute foreign and domestic information within the Soviet Union, and manage the news agencies of the Soviet republics’.¹²⁴ *TASS* output, like that of *Reuters* or the *Press Association*, could be picked up and used by other media companies, so whilst the general audience did not read *TASS*, they could read a newspaper that reported *TASS* releases. *TASS* concerns this thesis because Radio Moscow regularly quoted it as a source of a story, even reading out statements from it verbatim when necessary – however as this thesis demonstrates, it was just one of the sources Radio Moscow used to justify reporting about the invasion of Afghanistan and the Olympic boycott campaign.

3.2 FRAME ANALYSIS

The Oxford English Dictionary supplies numerous definitions of the word ‘framing’. Most pertinent to this thesis is the definition, ‘the action, method, or process of constructing, making or fashioning something (material or immaterial)’.¹²⁵ This definition will be expanded upon here, incorporating the understanding of previous scholars of frame analysis to build a description that can be applied to radio analysis and used to examine the broadcasting of the Soviet Union’s premier international broadcaster.

There have been numerous studies of framing, both as a concept and in practice, the seminal work in the field being Goffman’s 1974 book *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organisation of Experience*.¹²⁶ Frame analysis is often approached by focusing upon either the frame producer or the frame receiver, with few analyses seemingly combining the two.¹²⁷ This study approaches frame analysis with the focus upon the frame producer, Radio Moscow. In addition, this study analyses framing through the medium of international shortwave radio broadcasting – very few studies have used international radio as the medium through which to look at framing either

¹²³ “ITAR-TASS HISTORY,” accessed September 11, 2013, <http://www.itar-tass.com/en/p6.html>.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*

¹²⁵ “Oxford English Dictionary,” accessed August 23, 2013, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/74162?rskey=jIEZYT&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>. ‘Framing’.

¹²⁶ E. Goffman, “Frame Analysis, An Essay on the Organisation of Experience” (Northeastern University Press, 1986).

¹²⁷ N. Ruigrok and W. van Atteveldt, “Global Angling with a Local Angle: How US, British and Dutch Newspapers Frame Global and Local Terrorist Attacks,” *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics* 12 (2007). p.69-70

from the producer or audience perspective.¹²⁸ Frame analysis requires detailed evaluation of specific statements, without access to a source such as the Duxford BBC Monitoring archive this would previously have been very difficult for radio broadcasting.

This section will begin by explaining why frame analysis has been chosen for this research. Following this, it outlines the idea of framing from the broadcaster's perspective and then considers important aspects that affect the effectiveness of a frame upon the receiver. The media concepts of priming and agenda setting are both relevant and are also briefly discussed here. Finally, the definition of framing to be used for analysing the radio transcripts is suggested.

3.2.1 Why Frame Analysis?

This thesis has chosen to use frame analysis to explore the Soviet broadcasting as it has several advantages over other analytical processes. It explores how Soviet broadcasting reacted to the developing situation surrounding Afghanistan and the Olympic Games, and explores the differences in broadcasting to different audiences worldwide. Alternatively, this thesis could have explored the Soviet broadcasting by examining the 'strategic narratives'. However, whilst this is achievable and would lead to similar conclusions, it is not designed to produce the same type of results. This thesis concentrates on exploring the differences in the broadcasts and why those differences existed, thus helping to examine the Soviet perspective on the world in 1980. It does not set out to explore how the Soviet hierarchy, using radio as one of many media tools, attempted to build a narrative to further the ambitions or control of the Kremlin. These differences no doubt make up a larger strategic narrative on the part of the Soviet broadcasting controllers, but for a true understanding of their approach, editorial and management records would need to be analysed to see what the narrative was meant to be. For a strategic narrative approach to the Soviet war in Afghanistan using government documents, albeit primarily focused on withdrawal, see Laura Roselle's book 'Media and the Politics of Failure'.¹²⁹ As this thesis is exploring the output, and not the input, of radio broadcasting, it would not be right to make presumptions on what the Soviet strategic narrative was meant to be – however, by using frame analysis this thesis can explore what the Soviet broadcaster focused on in different areas of the world.

¹²⁸ Notable exceptions being Smith, "Some Effects of Radio Moscow's North American Broadcasts." and more recently Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics*. Fortner, "Analysis of Voice of America Broadcasts to the Middle East during the Persian Gulf War Crisis."

¹²⁹ Laura Roselle, *Media and the Politics of Failure: Great Powers, Communication Strategies, and Military Defeats (The Palgrave Macmillan Series in International Political Communication)* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

3.2.2 Theories of Framing – the Broadcaster Perspective

As a starting point in an analysis of the theory of framing, we can take the following explanation by Druckman –

‘...a framing effect is said to occur when, in the course of describing an issue or event, a speaker’s emphasis on a subset of potentially relevant considerations causes individuals to focus on these considerations when constructing their opinions.’¹³⁰

The framing of the Olympic boycott, and Afghanistan intervention, is not merely an analysis of the boycott or invasion, but rather an analysis of the means by which these events were presented to the listener by the Soviet broadcaster. The key point Druckman makes is his emphasis on a ‘subset of potentially relevant considerations’.¹³¹ What this subset was, and how it differed from region to region, is a key part of understanding the different ways the Soviet Union framed the invasion of Afghanistan and the Olympic boycott campaign.

Implicit within Druckman’s statement is the idea that a framed argument pushes the audience toward one way of thinking, that it is actually not a straight statement of fact but a biased interpretation of select elements that make up the overall issue. A further development of the concept of framing by Berinsky & Kinder states that ‘...frames are never neutral. By defining what the essential issue is and suggesting how to think about it, frames imply what, if anything, should be done.’¹³² Whilst partly agreeing with Druckman, this statement goes further than his idea that a framed argument is designed to help the audience consider, instead suggesting that frames define an issue in such a way that the audience do not have to consider – a framed argument suggests what to think. Research by Valkenburg et al highlighted four frames in which news tends to be placed – the conflict frame, the human-interest frame, the responsibility frame, and the economic consequences frame.¹³³ The frame in which a news item was placed affected not only what the audience thought about an issue, but also how they thought about it, thus supporting the idea that frames are able to influence thought more than just by helping with

¹³⁰ Druckman, J., ‘On the Limits of Framing Effects: Who can Frame?’ (The Journal of Politics, Vol.63, No.4, (November 2001), pp.1041-1066), p.1042

¹³¹ Ibid

¹³² Berinsky, A., Kinder, D., ‘Making Sense of Issues through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis’, (The Journal of Politics, Vol.68, No.3, (August 2006), pp.640-656), p.641

¹³³ P.M. Valkenburg, H.A. Semetko, and C.H. De Vesse, “The Effects of News Frames on Readers’ Thoughts and Recall,” *Communication* 26 (1999). p.551

the construction of opinion.¹³⁴

Berinsky & Kinder present a critical view of framing, one that is not far off appearing as indoctrination. It is the approach that both sides of the Iron Curtain would have accused the other of, all the while claiming their own broadcasts were more in keeping with the Druckman frame – helping consider rather than forcibly telling. There is certainly justification in suggesting international radio broadcasting was by no means neutral. In 1953 the British Government commissioned a report that stated this fact rather bluntly: ‘Wireless has given to Government for the first time direct means of access to audiences overseas, which enables them to influence foreign Governments by and through direct contact with the masses.’¹³⁵ One thing is for certain, ‘frames are never neutral’ – even the BBC, with its constant claim of impartial reporting, can never be neutral.¹³⁶ Even-handedness itself can create a favourable impression of the BBC, and by implication Britain, even when the reporting appears critical of British actions (e.g. British actions in the Suez Crisis).¹³⁷ Thus, a neutral approach can also be useful in creating a positive image of a broadcaster and broadcasting state in the minds of listeners. This is an essential part of framing, to get audiences to believe a report, they first need to believe in, and trust, the reporters. This in essence was, and remains, the ultimate purpose of international radio broadcasting.

As an analysis of Soviet radio broadcasting, this study focuses on producer framing rather than how the audience interprets the frames. Berinsky & Kinder, Entman, Fortner, Huang and Ruigrok & Atteveldt, have all produced case studies focusing upon the frame producer.¹³⁸ Only Fortner has investigated framing on the radio, but whilst the mediums of the other studies may

¹³⁴ Valkenburg, Semetko, and De Vesse, “The Effects of News Frames on Readers’ Thoughts and Recall.”, p.567; Druckman, “On the Limits of Framing Effects: Who Can Frame?”. p.1042

¹³⁵ TNA CAB/129/64/0, Overseas Information Service: Report of the Drogheda Committee, 13th November 1953, p.9

¹³⁶ Berinsky, A., Kinder, D., ‘Making Sense of Issues through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis’, (The Journal of Politics, Vol.68, No.3, (August 2006), pp.640-656), p.641

¹³⁷ Bookmiller, “The War of Words Without the War.” p.228-233

¹³⁸ R.M. Entman, “Framing US Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents,” *Journal of Communication* 41 (4) (1991): 6–28; A.J. Berinsky and D.R. Kinder, “Making Sense of Issues through Media Frames: Understanding the Kosovo Crisis,” *Journal of Politics* 68, no. 3 (2006): 640–656; Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics*; Fortner, “Analysis of Voice of America Broadcasts to the Middle East during the Persian Gulf War Crisis”; K. Huang, “A Comparison between Media Frames and Audience Frames: The Case of the Hill-Thomas Controversy” (University of Wisconsin--Madison, 1995); Ruigrok and van Atteveldt, “Global Angling with a Local Angle: How US, British and Dutch Newspapers Frame Global and Local Terrorist Attacks.”

differ, the research methods and ideas remain broadly similar.¹³⁹ Of particular note is Entman's conclusion that 'news frames are constructed from and embodied in the keywords, metaphors, concepts, symbols, and visual images emphasised in a news narrative.'¹⁴⁰ As this study is one of radio broadcasting, it is the keywords, metaphors and concepts used by the Soviets that will be important in analysing the frames used to attack the Moscow Olympic boycott campaign, and to defend the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Entman's ideas will be further discussed below regarding the BBC Monitoring Service transcripts.

Frames may be designed to make the audience think in a certain way, or consider some aspects above others, but whether they are effective or not is a different matter. How frames have been received has been analysed in works by Smith, Huang, Entman and Druckman – Smith's work on how people considered Radio Moscow broadcasts in the USA being most pertinent to this study.¹⁴¹ However, as he concentrated on the ideological strength of the broadcasts to North America, not the frames used, even his work is of limited relevance.

3.2.3 Theories of Framing – the Receiver Perspective

Entman has argued that the '...frames that guide the *receiver's* thinking and conclusion may or may not reflect the frames in the text and the framing intention of the communicator.'¹⁴² As important as it may have been for Soviet radio broadcasting to highlight above others certain aspects of the boycott or invasion, to be truly influential they would have had to consider the audience. For example, it would have been no good telling an American, or broadly Westernised, audience about how the boycott campaign was part of an evil American imperialist plan, but this line of argument may have had more success in countries less aligned with American ideals. When framing an argument, the background of the target audience is perhaps the most important part of the overall process. Without consideration of the education, religion, upbringing, wealth or political ideology of the target audience, a framed argument may struggle to succeed. A successful frame needs to strike a chord with the target audience; it needs to be

¹³⁹ Fortner, "Analysis of Voice of America Broadcasts to the Middle East during the Persian Gulf War Crisis"; Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics*.

¹⁴⁰ Entman, "Framing US Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents.", p.7

¹⁴¹ Smith, "Some Effects of Radio Moscow's North American Broadcasts"; Huang, "A Comparison between Media Frames and Audience Frames: The Case of the Hill-Thomas Controversy"; J.N. Druckman and K.R. Nelson, "Framing and Deliberation: How Citizens' Conversations Limit Elite Influence," *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 4 (2003): 729–745.

¹⁴² R.M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," *Journal of Communication* 43 (4) (1993): 51–58. p.52-53

grounded in their perception of the world, be rational and, ultimately, be believable. To have the utmost chance of success in their defence of the invasion of Afghanistan, and to encourage a disparaging view of the US-led boycott campaign, the Soviet Union broadcasters needed to recognise this and tailor their arguments appropriately.

Goffman has argued ‘it seems that we can hardly glance at anything without applying a primary framework, thereby forming conjectures as to what occurred before and expectations of what is likely to happen now.’¹⁴³ This further supports the idea that successful frames need to build on the background of the audience, their previous understanding and experience, but it also opens up the discussion to another related concept, the concept of priming. Priming refers ‘to the effect of some preceding stimulus or event on how we react, broadly defined, to some subsequent stimulus,’ and is an important part of considering the framing effects applied by the Soviet radio media to their broadcasts about the invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow Olympic boycott.¹⁴⁴ Putting forward an issue in such a way as to create a certain way of thinking is likely to be more successfully taken up by the target audience if they are already primed with some related knowledge or previous opinion.

3.2.4 Priming and Agenda Setting

The Cold War itself was both a frame and a priming tool. It was, and still is, a relatively simple and all-encompassing way of placing into a context any political, economic or social action between the end of the Second World War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Most international actions between 1945 and 1991 can be placed within this rather broad context, which afterwards, in what effectively became a self-perpetuating cycle, became the priming agent for the next framed event. Norris et al argue that frames ‘provide contextual cues, giving meaning and order to complex problems, actions and events...slotting the new into familiar categories or storyline “pegs.”¹⁴⁵ These familiar categories are a build-up of previous knowledge, so people are primed to accept what subsequently appears. Thus, the Soviet Union, when discussing the Olympic boycott (or the Western world in general), could link their criticism to audiences’ previous knowledge and understanding of such events as Vietnam, Watergate, Korea, or any of the supposed 215 times, according to Radio Moscow, that the USA

¹⁴³ Goffman, “Frame Analysis, An Essay on the Organisation of Experience.”, p.38

¹⁴⁴ J. Bryant and D. Zillmann, *Media Effects: Advances in Theory and Research* (Routledge, 2002). p.97

¹⁴⁵ Norris P., Kern M., and M. Just, eds., *Framing Terrorism: The News Media, the Government, and the Public* (Routledge, New York, 2003). p.4

had threatened military action before 1980.¹⁴⁶ The Western world could do the same when discussing the Soviet Union, and indeed did, with US President Carter relating the invasion of Afghanistan to the Second World War.¹⁴⁷ The audience already had knowledge and opinions of these events, so linking back to old actions provided a pre-conceived platform of opinion on which to interpret new events.

Linked to both the strength of frames and primes is the idea of agenda setting. As a concept agenda setting refers to the way the mass audience tends to judge the importance of an issue by the volume of media coverage, thus the more media coverage an issue gets the more the mass audience seems to deem it important.¹⁴⁸ However, this can also distort news importance – the invasion of Afghanistan was a major event during the Cold War, yet rightly or wrongly it was swiftly eclipsed at the time by the US-led Olympic boycott campaign, so in this case it would seem the major issue was buried beneath an avalanche of sporting concern. Agenda setting can also be exploited by those wishing to distract attention, to ‘bury bad news’ when something else dominates the news.¹⁴⁹ Cohen has argued that the agenda is arguably set by the media themselves, quoting Rosten’s claim that ‘the argument that giving the public what it wants is another way of saying what we [i.e. the editors] say the public wants.’¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, and perhaps an explanation for the focus on the boycott campaign rather than Afghanistan, he provides some compelling evidence about foreign affairs coverage in the US domestic press – the basic premise being that people are not interested, editors perceive that people are not interested, and therefore concentrate coverage on domestic issues instead.¹⁵¹

One reason Cohen gives for coverage of foreign news in the domestic US press was to give a superficial impression that the government was active on the international stage.¹⁵² Certainly, this was encouraged by the US government in early 1980, when the US administration tried to set the agenda so that it focused on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan – perhaps trying to make the US reaction to it distract attention in an election year from the struggling campaign to resolve the on-going Iranian hostage crisis. Numerous pronouncements by Jimmy Carter, a

¹⁴⁶ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 24th January 1980, 2300, section 2, p.2

¹⁴⁷ Carter, “The State of the Union address, 23rd January 1980.”

¹⁴⁸ D.A. Scheufele and D. Tewksbury, “Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models,” *Journal of Communication* 57, no. 1 (March 2007): 9–20. p.11

¹⁴⁹ ‘A very good day to get out anything we want to bury’ is apparently attributable to a UK government advisor after the terrorist attacks on 11th September 2001. See BBC News website, ‘Aide apologies for ‘attacks memo’ (10 October 2001).

¹⁵⁰ B Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton Univ Pr, 1963). p.254

¹⁵¹ Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy*. p.250-253

¹⁵² Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy*. p.261-262

United Nations (UN) resolution condemning the invasion and the initial rumblings that led to the boycott campaign all gained media prominence and made the issues (whether Afghanistan or Olympic) seem important. This illustrates the importance of agenda setting to the reporting of an event or issue, however, because of limitations to the data set used, this study primarily focuses upon the frames used and not the frequency of the reporting.¹⁵³

3.2.5 Frame Analysis – Definition

Framing is therefore about more than just presenting the facts of an issue or event in a certain way. As already stated, effective framing requires an understanding of how the target audience might perceive an event, which in turn requires an understanding of their background, ideology, political leanings and so forth. Analysis of how the Soviet Union framed reporting of the boycott campaign to different regions of the world, to different countries and in different languages provides an opportunity to investigate the Soviet perception of these different groups. How accurately the frames fit each audience will be judged through how the Soviet broadcasters communicated events – such communications can inform on regional aspects such as press freedom, Soviet influence, or foreign radio competition. In the case of the latter, one of the aims of the Western broadcasters was to tell a different version of events, ‘the truth’, to that the Soviets broadcasters were putting forth.¹⁵⁴ The implication being that ‘friendly’ competition over the airwaves would reduce the supposed excesses and exaggerations of the Soviet frames, as people could go elsewhere (whether legally allowed to or not) to corroborate what they were hearing.

This study will therefore look at the Soviet reporting on Afghanistan and the Olympic boycott from the perspective of studying the frame producer, not the frame receiver, using as a basis the definitions of framing supplied by Druckman and Berinsky & Kinder quoted above. However, in considering the concept of framing, this study will push these further, and incorporate the ideas of both Entman and Goffman in a broader definition. The frames used by the Soviet Union in broadcasting their messages around the world will be considered not just through the Druckman emphasis on a ‘subset of potentially relevant considerations’, but also through how this subset is portrayed to the listener – incorporating Entman’s ideas about keywords,

¹⁵³ This is partly due to limitations of the source material. The BBC Monitoring transcripts are not verbatim, and are not a complete review of radio broadcasting from the Soviet Union. However, as will be explained, whilst frequency cannot be completely analysed, reasonable estimates can be gained.

¹⁵⁴ Nelson, *War of the Black Heavens, The Battles of Western Broadcasting in the Cold War*. p.6

metaphors and concepts and the way in which each is used in an attempt to ‘sell’ the frame.¹⁵⁵ In addition, the consideration taken of the knowledge and experience of the target audience will add to this definition of framing, as it brings in the very important consideration of why a frame exists.¹⁵⁶ Through considering the frames used by the Soviet broadcasters in this manner, with regard to their content, language, and audience context, the discussion of framing becomes more than just an analysis of how the Soviet Union represented the intervention in Afghanistan and the Olympic boycott campaign, and instead becomes a prism through which to view and consider the world in 1980 as a whole.

3.3 FRAME ANALYSIS AND THE BBC MONITORING SERVICE

To use the BBC Monitoring material to investigate how Radio Moscow framed the invasion of Afghanistan and the Olympic boycott campaign, this study will employ a qualitative approach, examining what was said about the events, how it was said (phrasing, keywords etc.), and then whether it was part of an individual event frame or a wider Cold War frame.¹⁵⁷ By focusing on set periods and examining the material in this way, the study will compare and contrast the framing of the same event in broadcasts to different regions, to understand what listeners could be hearing. This is preferred to a quantitative approach which, whilst it would allow for analysis of how often mention of Afghanistan, the Olympic boycott, or other key words and themes were made, and would be valuable for a study of agenda setting, requires a blow-by-blow account of everything said over the radio, from Afghanistan to domestic farming. As the BBC Monitoring Service transcripts of Radio Moscow are not always complete transcripts, it would be difficult to place the quantity of broadcasts about the invasion or the boycott in the necessary wider context. However, the incomplete nature of the record does not affect the ability to examine the frames used through a qualitative approach that examines the available broadcasts.

Within the Monitoring Service material, this study will primarily focus on comparing the broadcasts of Radio Moscow to North America, Great Britain and Ireland, the Soviet Union, and the Arabic service to Persia. Additionally, the English language World Service is also analysed in depth for what it can tell us about the more general Soviet message – one that did

¹⁵⁵ Druckman, J., ‘On the Limits of Framing Effects: Who can Frame?’ (The Journal of Politics, Vol.63, No.4, (November 2001), pp.1041-1066), p.1042; Entman, “Framing US Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents.”, p.7

¹⁵⁶ Goffman, “Frame Analysis, An Essay on the Organisation of Experience.”, p.38

¹⁵⁷ Examples of qualitative analysis can be seen in Entman, “Framing US Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents.”, Fortner, “Analysis of Voice of America Broadcasts to the Middle East during the Persian Gulf War Crisis.”

not target a specific regional audience. There is a practical reason for this, in that these are the broadcasts with the most depth in the collection, and can therefore give a more insightful analysis. Each region also had a distinctly different approach to the boycott campaign, and a preliminary analysis of the source material also suggested that broadcasts to these states were very distinct, and that they will be a good showcase of the dichotomy of frames used by the Soviet Union.

When dealing with the transcript material, three issues arise that need examining before trying to interpret the frames Radio Moscow used: translation; the potential exclusion of material; and the abbreviation of material. The following paragraphs will outline each of these and discuss the effects they may have on the results.

When commenting on how the Soviet Union framed the boycott to different audiences, consideration must be made of the fact that parts of the material under investigation have been translated by the Monitoring Service. The difficulties of translation are well known, what works in one language may not work in another, meanings may change, whole phrases may become lost in translation – no two languages are close enough in structure or vocabulary to switch seamlessly.¹⁵⁸ One line of argument is that the translator often needs to translate what does not appear, the implicit and assumed cultural context and meaning that may be unknown to the eavesdropper – issues that would not appear in a straight verbatim translation.¹⁵⁹ However, whilst frame analysis does involve the study of emotive words, key phrases and rhetorical hooks, each of which can disappear in a translated document (translated in terms of both language and medium), the overall frame will not so easily disappear. For example, the overarching frame that appears throughout Soviet broadcasting is the idea that America was in the wrong and the Soviet Union was in the right – the United States was aggressive and militaristic, the Soviet Union was peaceful and friendly. This very basic but easily understandable ‘Cold War frame’ is one in which the audience can easily place any piece of information they hear, read or see. The framing for this is not lost in translation; it is too broad a frame.

Furthermore, the key aspect of this study is to investigate how the Soviet Union shifted the emphasis within these frames to fit the localised conditions of the audience – this does not always require access to the exact wording. Entman’s conclusion that ‘news frames are constructed from and embodied in the keywords, metaphors, concepts, symbols, and visual images emphasised in a news narrative’ is particularly relevant with regard to this, as there is

¹⁵⁸ Bielsa E. and S Bassnett, “Translation in Global News” (Routledge, 2009). p.7

¹⁵⁹ Bielsa E. and Bassnett, “Translation in Global News.” p.5-6, 64

more to a frame than just what exactly was said, it is the perspective it presents.¹⁶⁰ Unlike the study by Entman, the material here does not all appear in its original language, therefore some of the keywords and metaphors may have unfortunately been lost in translation. However, whilst the individual nuances that Entman investigated in his study may be difficult to pick up here (although where a word has a dual meaning the monitor notes this), overall frames used in different regions should be broad enough to be noticeable whether or not the material is translated.

This may be something to consider when analysing material broadcast to non-English language regions of the world, but the material broadcast to the United States, to Great Britain, and the World Service broadcasts are English language broadcasts – the only translation required was presumably by Radio Moscow translating from Russian to English. The Radio Moscow North American commentator, Vladimir Pozner, noted that in the North American service office, understanding of English ranged from extremely good to very poor, and very few ever wrote copy in English – a translation department took the Russian copy after it had been signed off by the editors and translated it into English.¹⁶¹ Thus it is unlikely to contain rhetorical flourishes a native speaker may insert.

The other factor to consider is that there will always be some aspect of the broadcasts lost in transcription. The way statements are said can considerably change the meaning of a sentence – the blandest statements can fire the imagination when spoken in the right manner. The transcript materials under analysis here very rarely have Monitor Notes commenting on the way it was spoken, so it has to be taken at face value. However, this is not a major concern as the frames can still be gained from analysis of the material overall – the occasional sentence may have a different meaning when spoken over the radio, but transcription of a whole report, commentary or roundtable debate is unlikely to be affected by this.

That the archive is not a complete verbatim copy of Radio Moscow broadcasting during this time could influence the analysis of the material, as briefly mentioned earlier. However, this does not necessarily mean analysis of the data will be inaccurate. One reason was that the invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow boycott campaign were important events, and information on both was important to record and pass on. Soviet radio may not have wanted to discuss the boycott campaign or the invasion, but because of the proliferation of media access in

¹⁶⁰ Entman, “Framing US Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents.” p.7

¹⁶¹ Pozner, *Parting with Illusions*. p.199

areas they broadcast into, and indeed even subversive broadcasting into the USSR itself, they were forced to address the issue. Frame analysis surrounding specific events does not require access to every broadcast for an accurate conclusion to be made, and the vast amount of material available for the period between the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the opening ceremony of the Moscow Olympic Games within the archive makes this a minor issue.

3.4 OTHER SOURCES

As this project is based in the UK, the majority of supplementary material used will be focused on the British reaction to the boycott campaign and other English language sources. This includes material from the US media, such as *The Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, and the former Soviet Union, with reports from *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* available via the *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*. The purpose of examining such material is that Radio Moscow was often prepared to quote from it – providing it supported the Soviet point of view. How accurately Radio Moscow quoted or cited foreign media sources needs to be investigated because often these quotes underlined a technique the broadcaster used when framing reports – using *The Washington Post* to suggest that President Carter was alone in his boycott quest is all very well, but does this represent the newspaper editorial line or is a comment taken out of context? It is not a surprise that Radio Moscow followed the same lines as the Soviet domestic press, especially *Pravda*, particularly as both ultimately reported to the Politburo. How they integrated foreign sources into their arguments leads to the question how far would they go in this? Would they distort or misrepresent the opinions of others to better present their own viewpoint? Using this source material helps with the aim of investigating Soviet methods of framing set out in the previous chapter.

Due to the lack of referencing over the airwaves, exact quotations from such media may be difficult to pinpoint. These quotes may also have been translated by both the BBC Monitoring Service listening to Radio Moscow, and Radio Moscow when preparing broadcasts, potentially altering the original meaning. However, as this thesis focuses on key international events, in most cases the date range that a quote may have come from can be narrowed down to within a few days – even if an exact quotation is not found, how that news media framed the boycott campaign and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan can still be discerned, and therefore the accuracy of Radio Moscow comments can still be considered. Whilst there may indeed be a sentence or column scorning the boycott or seemingly in praise of the occupation of Afghanistan, it may not reflect the overall message. However, as Hazan has written –

*'It was not difficult for Moscow to present a case of worldwide support. In every country, without exception, there were athletes and officials who thought the games should go ahead in Moscow, even when their governments and Olympic committees held a different view.'*¹⁶²

The journalist Christopher Booker backs up this viewpoint with a first-hand report of the conflict within the *Daily Mail* newsroom at the time –

*'[T]here was a heated argument raging over the Olympics... On one side were the paper's political writers, headed by editor David English, who were worked up over Afghanistan and strongly in favour of the boycott, on the other was the sports department, including the well-known columnist Ian Wooldridge, who took the view that sport and politics should be kept as far apart as possible, and were passionately opposed to the boycott.'*¹⁶³

So even within a newspaper that may have been vehemently against the Soviet actions, there was potential to find a voice that may have appeared supportive when taken out of the wider context.

The level of foreign press quotations broadcast over the radio is testament to the research undertaken to produce Soviet news stories, even if the quotes do not fully represent the opinion of the source from which they were cited. Whilst this thesis focuses its research on the radio transcripts produced by the BBC Monitoring Service, this additional material is necessary to fully appreciate how the Soviet broadcasters used the facts and other sources when framing arguments.

3.5 TIME FRAMES

Previous studies of framing have tended to focus on short periods of time, in part because the news cycle has been seen to be relatively short and the audience can quickly move onto something else.¹⁶⁴ Fortner, for example, studied two-week blocks of radio broadcasting around

¹⁶² Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980*. p.147

¹⁶³ Booker, *The Games War: A Moscow Journal*. p.31-32

¹⁶⁴ A. Downs, "Up and Down with Ecology- the 'Issue-Attention Cycle,'" *The Public Interest* 28 (1972): 38–50. describes the 'issue-attention' cycle and the 5 stages a news story goes through before disappearing. Previous studies of framing, such as Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics*. and Entman, "Framing US Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents." have tended to focus analysis around short periods of time around the studied event because of this.

US-Soviet meetings in the late 1980s.¹⁶⁵ The study of the invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow Olympic boycott campaign does not fit into a small time frame – concerns were raised regularly over a seven-month period. Yet whilst this study researches the broadcasting from late December 1979 to July 1980, there is no need to analyse every single broadcast during this time. The campaign to boycott the 1980 Moscow Games, and the condemnation for the invasion of Afghanistan, ebbed and flowed over the seven months between December 1979 and July 1980. There were not pronouncements, updates or criticisms every day from December to July. There were, however, times when coverage peaked, around key moments for the whole campaign and key moments for individual states or localised regions.

Rather than analyse Soviet framing over the whole seven-month period, this study will instead analyse radio broadcasts surrounding six key moments:

1. The invasion of Afghanistan
2. Carter's 'State of the Union' address
3. Lake Placid and the Kabul Uprising
4. Announcement of the American Boycott
5. Deadline for accepting invitations
6. The opening ceremony of the Olympic Games

The reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan was led by the United States, and after following the typical economic and political lines it settled on a campaign to boycott the Olympics. This was the overarching factor when determining the six case study date ranges. The first and last are clear-cut – broadcasting surrounding both the invasion itself and the opening of the Olympic Games. The case studies in between have been selected based on the key moments of the Olympic boycott campaign, and relate to either American announcements and actions, or key moments in an Olympic year, such as the deadline for accepting an invite. With the exception of the broadcasts surrounding the invasion of Afghanistan and the State of the Union address, the dates have been picked predominantly for their significance upon the boycott campaign, as whilst Soviet radio could avoid discussing the Olympic boycott when focusing on Afghanistan, they struggled to avoid mentioning Afghanistan when having to condemn the Olympic boycott campaign. In the months before the Olympic Games, there was more debate over the boycott than over Afghanistan; world reaction to the invasion peaked around January 1980, with UN resolutions, the Islamic Conference condemnation, sanctions, and the initial proposal of the

¹⁶⁵ Fortner, *Public Diplomacy and International Politics*.

boycott all coming within the first six weeks of the occupation. This reaction is covered within the first two case studies. The six chosen key moments do not cover all announcements about boycotts or condemnations by every state – it was a fluid campaign and therefore announcements and reaction times varied. However, discussion in the Soviet press, and announcements by states worldwide, peaked around the key dates selected, often because the United States had made an announcement or threat, and other states, including the Soviet Union, reacted accordingly.

The important moments within each case study, and the date ranges covered, are as follows:

23rd December 1979 – 10th January 1980. The significant moment was the invasion of Afghanistan by Soviet troops on 26th December 1979. Other important events include: The UN Security Council meeting over the New Year; 2nd January – West German ambassador to NATO mentions boycott possibility; 4th January – President Carter address the United States people on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

15th – 31st January 1980. This case study is based around the 23rd January 1980 State of the Union address by President Carter. Other events that were significant for the Soviet radio when framing their arguments at this time include: 14th January 1980 – United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES-6/2 condemns the invasion. 17th January – British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher endorses moving the Olympics. 19th January – President Carter announces possible boycott on NBC television program ‘*Meet the Press*’. 27th-29th January – the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers condemns the invasion.

5th – 28th February 1980. The key moments for the boycott campaign in this chapter were Muhammad Ali’s visit to Africa, 3rd- 11th February 1980, and the Lake Placid Winter Olympic Games, 14th-23rd February, including Cyrus Vance’s speech calling for a Summer Olympic boycott at an IOC meeting before the Winter Olympics opened.

19th March – 5th April 1980. President Carter officially announced the US Olympic team would not be going to Moscow in an announcement on 21st March 1980. Other significant moments included in this case study include reaction to the British House of Commons voting in favour of a boycott on 18th March, the British Olympic Association rejecting the boycott on 25th March and a meeting of European National Olympic Committees on 22nd March.

17th May – 3rd June 1980. 24th May 1980 was the deadline for accepting invitations to the Olympics. In the following days it finally became clear who the boycotting states were. The days preceding this saw a flurry of announcements from governments and Olympic Committees who had waited to determine the best option for their states, for example the Irish, Greek, Italian and Spanish Olympic Associations all declared their intentions between 20th-24th May.

12th – 26th July 1980. The significant date here is 19th July 1980, the opening ceremony of the

XXII Olympic Games in Moscow. This case study analyses the frames used to discuss the Olympics in the build-up to and during the opening ceremony and initial Olympic events, and considers how the Soviet Union framed the non-attendance of 65 state teams, many of them directly because of the invasion of Afghanistan.

By examining the broadcasting surrounding these dates, the frames used specifically to condemn the boycott and justify the invasion are highlighted. Furthermore, because Soviet media could be slow at reporting up to date news, study of Radio Moscow broadcasts will take place over a period of around two-weeks directly surrounding each of the six major events, to minimise the chances of missing any important Soviet responses.¹⁶⁶ The exception to this is Chapter 6 which covers closer to 3-weeks.

Due to the fragmented and drawn-out nature of the boycott campaign itself, focusing on these dates means potentially excluding relevant information from other times, such as when some states or Olympic Committees announced their boycott intentions. However, the majority of states and Olympic Committees announced a decision regarding boycotting, or a deferral to a later date, fairly quickly in response to US calls/pressure – so the issues regarding missing key moments in a frame are minimal. Even though the announcements and discussion of the boycott campaign and Afghanistan invasion were on-going throughout the time under study here, it remains the case that the radio broadcasting surrounding the six key dates given above will give the most insight into how the Soviet Union attempted to frame the Olympic boycott and the Afghanistan invasion. These six events were central to when the majority of reactions were made, and give more than enough insight into the various ways the boycott and invasion were framed – nothing occurring outside of the case studies is likely to add anything new.

3.6 SUMMARY

Through the use of frame analysis, combined with the extra source material discussed in this chapter, this study intends to discover the frames Radio Moscow used at a time of heightened international tension, thus adding to research and debate on framing, Cold War radio and Soviet radio broadcasting, and of the Soviet perspective on international relations in 1980. Frame

¹⁶⁶ Ross Johnson and Eugene Parta, *Cold War Broadcasting: Impact on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. A Collection of Documents*. p.96. Cites a Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research RFE/RL study, which found that 36% of those interviewed found out about the incident from foreign radio, 28% via Soviet TV and 15% by word of mouth. Mikkonen puts it more bluntly – ‘One of the major problems was that Soviet broadcasts were slow’. Mikkonen, “To Control the World’s Information Flows - Soviet Cold War Broadcasting.” p.260

analysis of the broadcasts will also importantly highlight the use of different ways to portray two events, the invasion and the subsequent boycott. How these were discussed showed that the world in 1980 was far more diverse than just those who supported the USA and those who supported the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the methods used in this thesis will explore the specifics of what was said and why, giving an account not only of the broad themes but also of the specific sentences used in many cases, and of the different programs used by Soviet radio to put over their messages. By looking in detail at what was said, it shall also comment on the accuracy of the broadcasts, something other studies have only briefly summarised. Finally, focusing on six key dates will further allow this study to examine specific radio broadcasts more closely, rather than just being an overview of the entire seven-month period. This method of research will allow for detailed study of the key moments, and thus more detailed study of what the radio broadcasters actually broadcast.

From the literature on framing, there are some expectations of the type of frames that might be expected. As mentioned in section 3.2.2, Valkenburg et al highlighted four news frames based around conflict, human-interest, responsibility, and economic consequences.¹⁶⁷ It can be anticipated that the invasion of Afghanistan will be framed in a manner that could fit into the first three, whilst the reaction, including the boycott campaign, will likely have frames based around economics and human-interest. Whilst this thesis will show that the broadcasting was more complex than merely framing events through an east-west perspective, it is still a perspective that defines Radio Moscow output, and indeed wider Cold War radio broadcasting as a whole. Therefore it can be expected that a 'Cold War frame' will become apparent, one that clearly concerns itself with portraying the US negatively whilst promoting the Soviet Union. Within these wider frames it is expected there will be sub-frames linked to specific people, to religion, to sport, and to domestic and international politics. This is by no means an exhaustive list, and it is one that will be expanded upon in the case study chapters and conclusion.

This study will also help with research and understanding of the Imperial War Museum BBC Monitoring Service material. Using the Soviet material surrounding the invasion and the boycott campaign as examples, this thesis will discuss the accuracy of material transcribed and translated, in both language and medium, and its usefulness in opening up other avenues for historical research, primarily into Soviet broadcasting during the Cold War, but as the archive

¹⁶⁷ Valkenburg, Semetko, and De Vesse, "The Effects of News Frames on Readers' Thoughts and Recall." p.551

holds material from all over the world from 1939 onward, also research on other areas of 20th Century radio broadcasting.

As yet, only Robert Fortner has used radio broadcasts as the primary focus of frame analysis. However he was involved in gathering the broadcast material initially, dictating what broadcasts needed recording, and this is where his work significantly differs from this study.¹⁶⁸ By using material recorded and transcribed previously, this thesis will have to overcome any gaps that may have appeared between what those requesting monitored material needed, and what the academic researcher of the future would require. Thus this thesis not only builds on a small body of literature, but also has to adapt the methodology to incorporate using an archive of recorded, and transcribed, material. Through this, it gives a good idea of the depth of detail and the ease of cross-referencing with other source material that can be achieved using the BBC Monitoring archive at Duxford.

Through the methodology described above, this thesis will achieve two overarching aims: firstly, to research how the Soviet Union framed the issues of sport, war and politics that arose with the invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent campaign to boycott the Olympic Games; and secondly, to demonstrate the opportunities the BBC Monitoring Service transcripts offer as a primary source material for examining international radio broadcasting during the twentieth century.

¹⁶⁸ Fortner, "Analysis of Voice of America Broadcasts to the Middle East during the Persian Gulf War Crisis." p.11-12

CHAPTER 4

REPORTING THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN AND EXPLAINING AWAY THE WORLD REACTION

The world awoke on the 27th December 1979 to hear news of a ‘Large Russian Force in Afghanistan’ – the Soviet invasion had begun.¹⁶⁹ By the 28th, *The Times* was reporting that ‘President Hafizullah Amin of Afghanistan was ousted from power and executed today [report written on 27th] in a coup strongly backed by Soviet troops in Kabul,’ and that ‘the radio broadcast announcing Mr Amin’s execution also said that the new administration had received a Soviet pledge for urgent assistance, including military aid.’¹⁷⁰ Similarly, *The Washington Post* reported that ‘an Afghan exile leader who had been living under Soviet protection... overthrew the Marxist government... according to radio reports’ – this was two days after the newspaper had reported an increase in Soviet combat troops in Afghanistan, designed to make it a Soviet client state, under the headline ‘Moscow versus Islam’.¹⁷¹

This chapter will examine how Radio Moscow joined this reporting rush, discussed the reasons behind Hafizullah Amin’s death, explained the change in Afghan government, and used different arguments to justify Soviet troop movements. It focuses on the broadcasts Radio Moscow sent around the world between the first announcement of the change of Afghan government, 27th December 1979, and the 10th January 1980, the eve of the United Nations General Assembly Emergency Session meeting that called for foreign troops to be removed from Afghanistan (discussed in Chapter 5, Boycott rumours become reality: How Soviet radio framed the State of the Union address).¹⁷²

4.1 THE INVASION AND THE RESPONSE

International condemnation for what the Soviet Union was perceived to have done was swift. In addition to complaints from state leaders such as President Carter and Prime Minister Thatcher, the United Nations Security Council met over the New Year to discuss the invasion – although this can mostly be put down to a Western engineered plot designed to force the Soviet Union to

¹⁶⁹ *The Times*, 27th December 1979, p.1 ‘Large Russian force in Afghanistan’.

¹⁷⁰ *The Times*, 28th December 1979, p.1

¹⁷¹ *The Washington Post*, 28th December 1979, p.A1, and 26th December 1979, p.A14

¹⁷² “UN General Assembly - Sixth Emergency Special Session, Resolution ES-6/2, 1980,” accessed May 17, 2013, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/209/43/IMG/NR020943.pdf?OpenElement>.

veto a motion put forward by members of the Non-Aligned Movement.¹⁷³ It took a further meeting of the UN General Assembly to produce a resolution condemning the appearance of foreign troops in Afghanistan. The Soviet hierarchy may have expected this, after all there was a similar reaction over the Soviet actions in Czechoslovakia in 1968. What was different this time though, and led to a defensive attitude that showed itself in a number of different ways over the Radio Moscow network, was President Carter's 4th January 'Address to the Nation on Afghanistan', in which he attempted to lead the world response by imposing sanctions upon the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁴ These sanctions included restricting Soviet rights to fish in US coastal waters, the prevention of high technology or 'other strategic items' transfers to the Soviet Union, and, most significantly of all at this time (in terms of press coverage), a restriction on the amount of grain the US was willing to supply the Soviet Union –

*'The 17 million tons of grain ordered by the Soviet Union in excess of that amount which we are committed to sell will not be delivered. This grain was not intended for human consumption but was to be used for building up Soviet livestock herds.'*¹⁷⁵

The Presidential announcement was the first time that the invasion of Afghanistan was put forward officially by the US for not attending the Olympic Games –

*'...the Soviet Union must realize that it's continued aggressive actions will endanger both the participation of athletes and the travel to Moscow by spectators who would normally wish to attend the Olympic Games.'*¹⁷⁶

Previously, talk of a boycott had centred on the Soviet human rights record.¹⁷⁷ For those favouring a boycott, this had achieved nothing. Whilst the global consensus was to join in verbal condemnation of Soviet actions, there was by no means a consensus to restrict grain or technology sales to the Soviet Union at this time, to the extent that the US Department of

¹⁷³ R. Smith, P. Salmon, and S. Twigge, *The Invasion of Afghanistan and UK-Soviet Relations, 1979-1982: Documents on British Policy Overseas, Series III, Volume VIII* (Routledge, 2012). p.59

¹⁷⁴ J. Carter, "Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan address to the Nation," 1980, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=32911&st=soviet+invasion+of+afghanistan&st1=#axzz1RLlRBVLD>.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ For example, see letters sent to the government of James Callaghan, British Prime Minister 1976-1979, TNA FCO/28/3546/30-16

Agriculture estimated the Soviet Union imported 31 million tonnes of grain from June 1979-June 1980 – more than ever before.¹⁷⁸

The first part of this chapter will examine the frames used by Radio Moscow to tell the world of the early stages of the intervention in Afghanistan. The latter sections present an examination of the different frames used to report the US-led world reaction depending upon the region to which they were broadcasting. Thus the chapter becomes an example of how the frames used by Radio Moscow shifted from initially defending Soviet actions to attacking the reactions of foreign states.

4.2 FRAMING THE INVASION

4.2.1 *The Death of Hafizullah Amin*

The first reports defending Soviet actions in Afghanistan were heard before the invasion had even taken place. Throughout the world on the 23rd December 1979, Radio Moscow commentators were reported as quoting from a *Pravda* article that condemned western media reports of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, countering with the complaint that CIA and Chinese led training of subversives was happening on the Afghan-Pakistan border.¹⁷⁹ Therefore on the 27th, when, alongside informing of a change of Afghan government, the announcement about Soviet assistance to combat insurgency was made, listeners were already primed to understand who the insurgents were.

The rise of Babrak Karmal to Afghan President, and the Soviet assistance he immediately requested, was broadcast to the world by Radio Moscow on 27th December. Initially, Radio Moscow reported the same message around the world. World Service listeners were informed Babrak Karmal was the new President, but the focus was on the previous President, Hafizullah Amin –

‘...the anti-people and dictatorial regime of Hafizullah Amin has been crushed. Karmal has confirmed loyalty to the ideals of the 1978 April revolution and says that the state

¹⁷⁸ R.L. Paarlberg, “Lessons of the Grain Embargo,” *Political Science* (1980). p.154-155- They imported 2.5 million tons less than planned though.

¹⁷⁹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 23rd December 1979, 1300, 1.5; IWM/SU/D/212 RM Italian 23rd December 1979, 1730; IWM/SU/C/234 RM Eng Asia 23rd December 1979, 1400; IWM/SU/D/212: RM Greek 23rd December 1979,; RM Port Europe, 23rd December 1979, 1930; IWM/SU/D/213 RM French Europe 23rd December 1979, 1730; IWM/SU/E/174: RM Finn 23rd December 1979, 1630; RM Bulgarian 23rd December 1979, 1630; RM Czech 23rd December 1979, 1600

*will adhere to general democracy and justice, respect for national traditions and religion, for progress and wellbeing, for equality and fraternity, of all peoples of Afghanistan.*¹⁸⁰

Variations of this announcement appeared in broadcasts worldwide, although not all immediately.¹⁸¹ For listeners within the Soviet Union, the Radio Moscow Home service informed listeners about Amin's demise on 27th December, also calling him '...anti-people and dictatorial...', and placed emphasis on Karmal's expressed loyalty to the April revolution, religion and national traditions.¹⁸² Rather than primarily frame the problems around the CIA, China, or foreign interference, Radio Moscow initially used a 'personification' frame – one that focused the causes on the actions of one man. Hafizullah Amin represented all that was wrong in Afghanistan, problems the Soviet backed Karmal was working to correct.

There is a further point to highlight in this area with regard to how Amin's demise was reported, one that is also an example of frame localisation. Home service listeners also heard that Babrak Karmal would be working for, '...true democratic justice... our people... will in future continue to favour peace and freedom, independence and democracy.'¹⁸³ This differed from the version heard on the World Service, and significantly from the version heard on the North American service. The important difference was the April revolution. Very clearly emphasised on the Home service, North American listeners instead heard reference to '...the final victory of the revolution', but this seemed to be an afterthought in a statement that said the regime would adhere to '...the ideals of the 1978 revolution and... the state will work for genuine democracy and justice...'.¹⁸⁴ Soviet listeners heard that the regime would support true democratic justice, and the people would favour democracy, North American listeners heard the regime would work for genuine democracy – it would seem that there was more emphasis on a commitment to democracy in broadcasts to listeners in North America.

¹⁸⁰ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 27th December 1979, 2100, 1.1

¹⁸¹ These variations are likely to have been caused by translation. Those told on 27th: IWM/SU/B/520 RM Home, 2100; IWM/SU/C/234 RM N.Am, 2300; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE, 2100, 1.1; IWM/SU/E/175: RM Hungarian 2000; RM Serb-Croat 2030; IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 2100 Those informed on the 28th included: IWM/SU/C/234: RM GBI, 2000; RM Eng Africa, 1700; RM Eng Asia, 1400; IWM/SU/E/175 RM Macedonian 1800; RM Polish 1300; IWM/SU/D/212 RM Swedish 1900; IWM/SU/D/213: RM Fre Africa 1700; RM French Europe 1730; IWM/SU/F/ RM Turkish 1530;

¹⁸² IWM/SU/B/520/ RM Home 27th December 1979, 2100, 9

¹⁸³ IWM/SU/B/520 RM Home 27th December 1979, 2100, 9

¹⁸⁴ IWM/SU/C/234 RM N.Am 27th December 1979, 2300, 1.1

The same democratic boost also seems to have been applied to reports of the change of regime broadcast to listeners in Britain & Ireland. In fact, the demise of Amin was not considered relevant for these listeners; they were merely informed that Babrak Karmal had been,

‘elected to top party and government posts in the republic... Kabul Radio has announced the formation of a new Cabinet... It has asked the Soviet Union for urgent political, economic and military aid and moral support.’¹⁸⁵

The word ‘election’ conjures up images of the democratic process in Britain – mentioning that the previous leader had been executed by the new regime would destroy this illusion. The chronology of events is also consistent – a new leader asked for Soviet assistance, not just military but also political and economic. However, it was clear within weeks that much of this statement was misleading – if Karmal was elected by anyone, it was the Politburo in Moscow, and Kabul radio did not broadcast any message, it was a Soviet station saturating Kabul radio frequencies. In addition, the ‘political, economic, military and moral support’ downplayed the scale of the Soviet military intervention, changing how it would be perceived. Radio Moscow was using an ‘assistance’ frame to get listeners to think of the Soviet intervention as more than just troops and tanks.

World Service listeners were provided with more information on the 28th, including the revelation that,

‘According to news agencies, there has been a revolutionary trial of Hafizullah Amin. The court found him guilty and sentenced him to death. The sentence has been carried out.’¹⁸⁶

Whereas North American and Soviet listeners heard the Amin regime had been crushed, and British listeners heard nothing, the World Service broadcast a lie. Amin had been murdered in a gun battle with Soviet commandos, and may have also been suffering the after effects of poison administered by Soviet assassins.¹⁸⁷ There was no ‘revolutionary trial’. However, adding the words ‘according to news agencies’ was also an interesting way of distancing Soviet involvement in his demise, and if necessary a way of hiding behind the lie. This implied Radio Moscow was relaying the events through the reporting of foreign media, which suggests there

¹⁸⁵ IWM/SU/C/234 RM GBI 28th December 1979, 2000, 1.2

¹⁸⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 28th December 1979, 0900, 1.1

¹⁸⁷ Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*. p.95-99. Highlights the joined-up nature of Soviet thinking – the poison was administered on the orders of the Soviet hierarchy, but Amin’s Soviet doctors, unaware of this, worked to save him, thus scuppering the attempt.

was a concern that Radio Moscow reporters would not be believed had they said the same thing. Equally, one of the 'news agencies' could have been *TASS*. It was also an interesting method for the reporting of Radio Moscow itself – it emphasised that Radio Moscow was relaying information, preferring to imply a use of sources from foreign media rather than the media of the government involved in Afghanistan and implicit in the murder of Amin and his family.

Later that day, the World Service added the following to its reporting of Karmal's statement – 'Hafizullah Amin and his supporters are described in the appeal as agents of American imperialism.'¹⁸⁸ This neatly linked the two frames of personification and foreign involvement, supplying listeners not only with a reason for the claimed actions of Amin, US backing, but one that could contrast with the words of the Soviet backed Karmal. It also further emphasised US involvement in the region. This was not repeated to listeners of the North American or British services, it did however make an appearance via the airwaves of the English language South East Asian service, as an attempt to tap into any anti-US feelings lingering from the Korean or Vietnam wars, and associated incidents. This was an early example of localisation, in which Radio Moscow tried to frame events around an audience perception. On the other hand, listeners in North America or Britain & Ireland may have been disillusioned with Radio Moscow reporting on Afghanistan if it started to move into anti-US rhetoric too quickly, thus requiring a different approach in framing the previous Afghan leader.

When broadcasting to the European mainland, either east or west, Radio Moscow stuck to the chronology that Amin had been removed, the Karmal government had formed, and the new regime had immediately asked for help from the Soviet Union.¹⁸⁹ The same applied to broadcasts in Arabic, although these straightaway personified the situation around 'the anti-people Amin regime'.¹⁹⁰ It is clear that initially Radio Moscow was broadcasting the same basic line, with some minor variations, all over the world. Reporting the invasion, Radio Moscow had managed to avoid mentioning the actions of the Soviet troops, and had instead framed the reporting around why the situation had occurred. Reporting foreign involvement in Afghanistan in the days before the Soviet invasion took place primed the audience to be ready for justifications that based themselves around non-Afghan subversives. Personifying Afghan

¹⁸⁸ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 28th December 1979, 1300, 2.3

¹⁸⁹ For examples, see box IWM/SU/D/212 – RM Italy 28th December 1979, 1730, 1.1; RM Swede 28th December 1979, 1900, 1.1-2; RM Port Europe 28th December 1979, 1.1; RM Spain 28th December 1979, 2200, 2.1; box IWM/SU/E/174 – RM Finn 28th December 1979, 1630, 1.1; RM Bulg 28th December 1979, 1630, 1.1; RM Czech 28th December 1979, 1600; RM Ger 28th December 1979, 2000, 1.1-2; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 28th December 1979, 2 and 3

¹⁹⁰ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 27th December 1979, 2100

problems in the actions of the previous Afghan leader, one who Radio Moscow claimed was backed by US imperialism, supplied the station with a means to justify its actions, and built upon the priming that had taken place. It also juxtaposed nicely against the coverage of Babrak Karmal and the assistance he asked for from the Soviet Union.

Therefore, altering the reporting of how Amin died and the ways the station shifted how ‘democracy’ appeared in broadcasts was an excellent example of how Radio Moscow localised a frame depending on the audience background. Clearly, it was not acceptable to tell the world exactly how Amin died, but some of the reports of the change of government point more towards trying to relate events back to the target listeners – suggesting elections or revolutionary trials depending on the broadcast. This way of adjusting the frame placed events in a more localised context for the target audience, helping the listener interpret them in the manner Radio Moscow wanted.

4.2.2 Reporting the Reaction

Rather than focusing on what was happening on the ground, it appears the first reports of the invasion of Afghanistan were structured around the personification frame. The only mention of the invasion itself came through the citing of international law as a justification for Soviet involvement – again using the ‘assistance’ frame to help portray legitimacy. The World Service, on 28th December, issued the first of a much repeated justification for the Soviet soldiers walking around Kabul —

‘...[the Afghan] government has asked the USSR for urgent political, moral, economic and military aid, based on the treaty of friendship signed on 5th December last year. The Soviet government has met the request.’¹⁹¹

This downplayed the extent of the occupation by burying the military component of the invasion in amongst claimed economic and political assistance. This was contrasted with the reporting by foreign press groups, and marked a shift in Radio Moscow reporting. Rather than concentrate on Amin, the Soviet broadcaster began to focus on analysing foreign press reports of the situation. This was phase two in the initial reporting of the Soviet reporting on Afghanistan – criticising and trying to undermine negative comments made by foreign groups – the ‘misrepresentation’ frame.

¹⁹¹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 28th December 1979, 1600, 1.1

Increasingly, emphasis began to be placed on supposed provocations within Afghanistan caused by the US and other states. These were not only used to justify Soviet intervention, under the 'Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation', and the United Nations Charter, but also to highlight the 'hypocrisy' of foreign governments. The Soviet Union was legally helping a neighbour in distress; the states that were encouraging upheaval in Afghanistan were using their presses to distort the Soviet actions. Home service listeners were told that the United States and 'the enemies of democratic Afghanistan' had been against the April revolution from the beginning, with the result that –

*'foreign imperialistic forces entered into a direct deal with internal counter-revolutionary forces... [with] virtually unlimited support from the part of imperialistic circles in the United States, Peking... and governments of certain other countries...'*¹⁹²

The word 'imperialistic' was quickly associated here with the enemies of Afghanistan, thus setting a distinctive and long running frame in motion. The target audience, Soviet listeners, will have fully understood the importance of this word. Following on from this, listeners were told in no uncertain terms about US reasons for being in Afghanistan –

*'Within the notorious "strategic arc", which the Americans have for decades been building near the Southern borders of the Soviet Union, flaws have been discovered, and in order to repair them, they like to encompass the Afghan people in this arc, and with it the peoples of other countries in this region.'*¹⁹³

After the initial statement that the Afghan regime had changed, now Radio Moscow was retrospectively explaining the reasons behind this upheaval – and at the core of these reasons was the United States.

Listeners to other services heard reports that concentrated on attacking imperialist and reactionary propaganda, rather than focusing on the great Soviet fear of being encircled by the US. This was not done through the condemnation of foreign sources by Radio Moscow, but through reporting the Soviet-supporting words of others. It began with the World Service broadcasting comment by 'a Foreign Ministry spokesman' in Delhi, presumably part of the Soviet-favouring Indian government, that '...the Soviet military aid to Afghanistan cannot be regarded as a violation of the principles of nonalignment because it is being given at the request

¹⁹² IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 30th December 1979, 1900, 'On the events in Afghanistan...' p.2

¹⁹³ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 30th December 1979, 1900, 'On the events in Afghanistan...' p.3

of the Afghan leaders.¹⁹⁴ This followed some reporting of denouncements in Czechoslovakia and the GDR (from *Rude Pravo* and *Neues Deutschland*) of foreign periodicals raising a ‘hue and cry in connection with the events in Afghanistan’.¹⁹⁵ Rather than directly criticise foreign media comments on Afghanistan, Radio Moscow had chosen to report that others, still within the Warsaw Pact, had denounced these comments.

Pravda was a key source of information for Radio Moscow’s broadcasts on the invasion. Versions of one article were broadcast via the Warsaw Pact Radio Moscow services of Bulgarian, Czech, German, Hungarian, Macedonian, Polish and Serbo-Croat, and also the ‘neutral’ state Finland.¹⁹⁶ Another *Pravda* article was broadcast via the English and French language African services, and the English service to Asia.¹⁹⁷ North American audiences heard comments critical of their own government from a *Pravda* article titled ‘The Duplicity of Imperialist Propaganda’.¹⁹⁸ British and Irish audiences heard a *Pravda* report as a source used to explain events in Afghanistan.¹⁹⁹ There was very little differentiation here, as *Pravda* supplied the frame and Radio Moscow reproduced it. Even the Arabic language service to Persia stuck with *Pravda*, although one broadcast also highlighted *L’Humanite* and the Lebanese news source *al-Qa’id* on the US reaction.²⁰⁰ For Radio Moscow, *Pravda*, literally meaning truth, was worth repeating worldwide.

Other non-Soviet Union or Warsaw Pact sources were also cited. In broadcasts to the Western European states with strong socialist or communist parties, the French communist newspaper *L’Humanite* was cited as denouncing ‘...the hypocritical anti-Afghan campaign launched by the USA and western countries.’²⁰¹ This was more than just an attack on ‘foreign periodicals’. French listeners also heard a *Pravda* report on the situation, as did listeners to the Radio

¹⁹⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 30th December 1979, 0900, 1.3

¹⁹⁵ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 30th December 1979, 0900, 1.2

¹⁹⁶ From box IWM/SU/E/174 – RM Bulg 31st December 1979, 1630, 1.1; RM Czech 31st December 1979, 1630, 1.1; RM Ger 30th December 1979, 2000, 2;

From box IWM/SU/E/175 - RM Hung 31st December 1979, 1800, 1.3; RM Mace 31st December 1979, 1800, 1.2; RM Polish 31st December 1979, 1700, 2.4; RM Serb 31st December 1979, 1730, 2.1;

IWM/SU/E/174 RM Finn 31st December 1979, 1630, 1.2

¹⁹⁷ IWM/SU/C/234 RM Eng Africa 31st December 1979, 1700, 1.3; RM Eng Asia 31st December 1979, 1400, 1.1; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 31st December 1979, 1830, 1.2

¹⁹⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 2nd January 1980 0001 2.1 and 4th January 2300, 2.1

¹⁹⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 30th December 1979 2000, 1.1

²⁰⁰ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arab 30th December 1979, 2100, 1.1 and 1200, 1.3

²⁰¹ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 30th December 1979, 1730, 1.2. This was also heard by listeners of the following Western European stations. IWM/SU/D/212 (all same box) RM Port Europe 30th December 1979, 1900, 1.2; RM Swede 30th December 1979, 1.2;

Moscow Italian service.²⁰² However, Italians, whose Communist Party disagreed with the invasion of Afghanistan, did not hear the *L'Humanite* denouncement of those condemning the Afghan invasion, they only heard the *Pravda* report. Rather than discuss the situation in Afghanistan, at this point Radio Moscow was focusing on reporting how others had criticised foreign reporting of the situation.

On the 31st December, World Service listeners heard that the Afghan government had joined the chorus condemning foreign press reports, with a statement that ‘...condemned [the] propaganda campaign of imperialist and reactionary forces over Soviet aid...’.²⁰³ The condemnation by the Afghan government was repeated on the North American service, however there was a lack of criticism of media reporting that portrayed Soviet actions negatively.²⁰⁴ The same applied for listeners in Britain & Ireland, there were no comments from press services criticising unfavourable press reports – the sole mention of any imperialist or reactionary propaganda came via the words of the Afghan government.²⁰⁵ Notably, nowhere were there specific mentions of the broadcasts or articles that were reactionary or imperialist – listeners were just told they existed.

Epitomising not only the view Radio Moscow was trying to put across, but also the threadbare nature of the iron curtain through its clear understanding that Soviet people were listening to western broadcasts, Home service listeners were told that,

*‘The inventions being spread currently by imperialist propaganda media about the “occupation” of Afghanistan by Soviet troops, about the involvement of Soviet military personnel in internal events in that country, and about the Soviet Union’s interference in its internal affairs creating a threat to international peace have nothing in common with reality.’*²⁰⁶

Again, the reporting of foreign media concentrated around the imperialism and misrepresentation frames, but again Radio Moscow did not provide specific examples. However, the broadcaster was specific in finding foreign sources that appeared to praise the Soviet actions in Afghanistan. The Home service reported that -

²⁰² IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 31st December 1979, 1730, 2.1; IWM/SU/D/212 RM Italian 30th December 1979, 2100, 1.1

²⁰³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st December 1979, 2100, 1.2

²⁰⁴ IWM/SU/C/234 RM N.AM 31st December 1979, 2300, 1.2

²⁰⁵ IWM/SU/C/234 RM GBI 31st December 1979, 2000, 1.1 and 30th December 1979, 9.1

²⁰⁶ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 30th December 1979, 1900, part 2, p.3

*'The London Times stresses the statement of Karmal Babrak that had not the genuine patriotic forces taken the creative revolutionary initiative into their hands, then things would have turned into such a way that national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and peace in this region would find themselves under serious threat [sic].'*²⁰⁷

It is quite true that *The Times* reported Karmal's statement, under the title 'Soviet action 'prevented a bloodbath', says Kabul', however this was a small column on page six, hardly a place to stress a news story.²⁰⁸ Radio Moscow was implying that *The Times* supported the Soviet action, or at least was not against it – it failed to report that the same page of the newspaper also had the headline 'China likens Afghan coup to rape of Prague', and 'Why the Russians must win the 'Great Game' at all costs'.²⁰⁹ However, it was unlikely that many Soviet listeners would have access to a London newspaper, and this story was not reported in broadcasts to Britain & Ireland, so Radio Moscow, in being selective in their reporting, could give the impression that the newspaper supported the Soviet actions without being shown to have distorted the facts.

This instance of cherry-picking select reports to imply support for, or some understanding of, the Soviet action calls into question the support claimed to be had from other sources. For example, Home service listeners were also reassured about foreign support for Soviet actions from *Nhan Dan*, a Vietnamese communist newspaper, cited as saying 'the revolution in Afghanistan has won a glorious victory'.²¹⁰ They also heard a Japanese newspaper cited as saying '...events in Afghanistan stem from imperialist interference'.²¹¹ A Czech newspaper, *Rude Pravo*, was quoted as complaining imperialism and Maoism had conducted anti-Afghan activities for a long time.²¹² It is not clear who the 'Japanese newspaper' was, but it is clear that the other two sources were from communist states. The sources Radio Moscow used to help frame the argument that the Soviet Union were acting with world support appear either to have been communist or misquoted – conveniently to areas that would have struggled to get hold of the original source. The same applied for those news sources Radio Moscow labelled imperialist

²⁰⁷ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 31st December 1979, 2.1

²⁰⁸ *The Times*, 31st December 1979, p.6, Column D

²⁰⁹ *The Times*, 31st December 1979, p.6

²¹⁰ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 31st December 1979, 2.1

²¹¹ Ibid

²¹² Ibid

– vague references rather than solid examples were used so the broadcaster could not easily be proved wrong.

4.3 THE SPEECH

4.3.1 SALT-2 and Grain

Before US President Carter made his television address on the Soviet actions in Afghanistan, Radio Moscow had not mentioned any specific criticisms of the action. Listeners had heard about the propaganda of imperialist and reactionary forces, and the hypocrisy of the US and the West. Nowhere had there been specific statements addressing the various announcements of Margaret Thatcher, Jimmy Carter, Malcolm Fraser (Australian Prime Minister) and Joe Clark (Canadian Prime Minister), or any of the rumours about the Olympics that began to surface. It was as if Radio Moscow was trying to ride the tide of disapproval, reporting everything through vagueness or silence, except the statements by Afghan or Soviet sources, hoping it would all soon end. Carter's 4th January 1980 'address to the Nation on Afghanistan' changed this.

The first Radio Moscow report of Carter's speech appeared on 5th January 1980, for listeners to the World Service –

*'Carter has made a TV address to the nation on the South West Asian situation. TASS says that the President tried to create a false impression of Soviet help to Afghanistan.'*²¹³

The immediate reaction was to frame this as misrepresenting Soviet actions – Carter was wrong about the Soviet 'help'. The claim of creating a 'false impression' was also reiterated to those listening to the North American service – this followed a report stating that the UN Ambassador for the Soviet Union, Oleg Troyanovsky, had complained that the UN debate on Afghanistan was 'tantamount to interference'.²¹⁴ Thus the speech was placed in a context of interference and deceit, further heightened by a report from *Pravda* describing the US as 'two-faced and hypocritical' over Afghanistan, and a claim that *The Daily Telegraph* had reported Chinese weaponry pouring into Afghanistan.²¹⁵ To help frame the event, Radio Moscow again used the tactic of backing it up with external sources – admittedly *Pravda* is not that far removed from

²¹³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 5th January 1980, 1500, 1.3. This also appeared via IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 5th January 1980, 2300, 1.2

²¹⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 5th January 1980, 2300, 1.1-2

²¹⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 5th January 1980, 2300, 3,5

Radio Moscow, but *The Daily Telegraph* appears to have been quoted to add some foundation to the interference claim.

North American listeners heard statements from TASS on the speech, but there were no initial comments on the specifics, such as the implications of the grain or fishing embargoes.²¹⁶ Broadcasts to Britain & Ireland also lacked any specifics about the address, with only an *Izvestiya* article, accusing Carter of undermining détente, broadcast to listeners a full five days after the televised speech.²¹⁷ In the days immediately after the speech there were no comments on specifics, just vague dismissals and explanations of the reasons behind it.

These were also the methods and frames used to report the speech to Home service listeners, in which Carter was accused of -

‘... [striving] to create the false impression as if the USSR, in giving aid to Afghanistan, were pursuing some kind of aims other than lending support to the rebuttal of foreign aggression which is taking place with the direct participation of the United States and China.’²¹⁸

However, another broadcast to Soviet listeners went further, discussing one of the specifics of the speech. President Carter explained the deferral of the ratification of SALT-2 (the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) was necessary ‘...so that Congress and I can assess Soviet actions and intentions... as circumstances change in the future, we will, of course, keep the ratification of SALT-2 under active review...’.²¹⁹ This was the first part of the speech Radio Moscow pounced upon. A few hours after initially being told about the false impression being created by the USA, Home service listeners heard that SALT-2 was,

‘...contrary to the national interests of the USA. Indeed in this regard the President chose as a pretext for this postponement the Soviet Union’s aid for Afghanistan.’²²⁰

This statement introduced the ‘pretext’ frame, designed to give listeners the impression that the US Administration had planned a specific action and was waiting for an opportunity to act; Afghanistan was used as that opportunity. A statement made earlier in the roundtable debate explained why:

²¹⁶ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 6th January 1980, 1.1, 2

²¹⁷ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 9th January 1980, 2000

²¹⁸ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 6th January 1980, 0330, 3, p.2

²¹⁹ Carter, “Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan address to the Nation.” Accessed 26th February 2014

²²⁰ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 6th January 1980, 0800, ‘International Observers at the Round Table’, Part 2, p.7

*'...the endless dragging out of the ratification of SALT-2, and in the setting up of the quick reaction forces, which are to secure the strategic interests of the United States in the Near East and other regions in crisis.'*²²¹

As all that was required on the American side for the SALT-2 Treaty was Congress ratification, under international law this still prevented the US from acts that could defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty.²²² So to some extent President Carter's remark about delaying the ratification was merely political posturing to look strong domestically, and Radio Moscow's claims about the treaty were redundant. However, placed alongside the quick reaction force, a group Carter spoke of in defensive terms, yet Radio Moscow reported in a frame couched in aggressive terms, listeners were presented with a speech that did not set out to punish the Soviet Union for acting in Afghanistan, but propel US aggressive desires upon the world.

Coverage of another *Pravda* article preceded this debate in Home service broadcasts, explaining that there was no substance to the 'imaginary Soviet threat', and that Carter's TV speech was merely exploiting 'the hysteria, being artificially whipped up in the United States of America...'.²²³ Carter had used this to '...again set in motion the rusty weapon of intimidation and blackmail which in the past has always been unsuccessfully used many times by the United States against the land of the Soviets.'²²⁴ Soviet listeners also heard the current (Soviet-installed) Afghan President, Babrak Karmal, condemn the United States as well –

*'The vicious fabrications of western circles concerning the latest events in Afghanistan and attacks on the Soviet Union...are nothing new. Imperialism is always active against national independence of peoples and their close co-operation with socialist countries, above all the Soviet Union.'*²²⁵

Interestingly this source cannot be found in any other broadcast region. Alongside the *Pravda* comments, Radio Moscow again reported using the frames of imperialism and misrepresentation. Importantly though, there was also an 'historical' frame introduced to this situation – it was just another act of imperialist aggression against 'the land of the Soviets'. This completely bypassed the fact it was Soviet troops who invaded Afghanistan and murdered the

²²¹ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 6th January 1980, 0800, 'International Observers at the Round Table', Part 1, p.4

²²² Arms Control Association, "Strategic Arms Limitation Talks II (SALT II)," accessed May 16, 2013, <http://www.armscontrol.org/documents/salt2>.

²²³ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 6th January 1980, 0730, 'International Review in *Pravda*', p.2

²²⁴ Ibid

²²⁵ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home First, 6th January 1980, 0330, 'International Diary'.

incumbent president. Rather than being a defence of Soviet actions, the reporting of the United States Administration's reaction was aggressive – Radio Moscow was on the attack.

This attack had limits though. Initially there appeared no desire to press home on the specifics of President Carter's address on Afghanistan to certain audiences – i.e. those who may have heard it, or read about it in a free/less-restrictive press. With the exception of debates about the delay to the SALT-2 Treaty, there seems to have been a slight pause between the initial flurries of anti-Carter reporting and the reporting that actually discussed his policies, such as the grain embargo. Having had several days to develop a response though, Radio Moscow began to turn its ire away from SALT-2 and denouncing Carter's 'false impressions', and listeners began to hear more about the specifics of the speech and the trade restrictions – foremost amongst these was the grain embargo. President Carter argued that the three areas – grain, high technology and fishing - were 'particularly important' to the Soviet Union.²²⁶ He also announced that the US would remove the grain from the market using price support programs, so as not to cause suffering to the US farmer, and the US would '...increase amounts of grain devoted to the alleviation of hunger in poor countries, and we'll have a massive increase of the use of grain for gasohol production here at home.'²²⁷ While the speech tried to focus attention on Afghanistan and began a concerted effort to punish the Soviet Union for this infraction of international politics, Radio Moscow chose to tell listeners about the implications of the grain embargo, not upon the Soviet Union, but upon the United States farmer and the world's poor.

The delay to SALT-2 had been reported with the frames of aggression and history. The grain embargo reports highlighted the damage President Carter's policy would do to the typical person – this was the 'people harming' frame. Unsurprisingly, the North American service chose to focus on the implications for the domestic farmer. Quotes from the *Wall Street Journal*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and The National Corn Growers' Association, were used in Vladimir Pozner's daily talk to North American listeners, stating that 'this move was anything but popular', and, furthermore, questioned how the US Administration was going to afford to buy back the excess grain.²²⁸ The senior editor of *Milling and Baking News* was quoted as saying the decision, 'can be described as one that could virtually destroy an industry'.²²⁹ A later commentary informed listeners that the White House was spending \$2.5 billion buying up the

²²⁶ Carter, "Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan address to the Nation."

²²⁷ Ibid

²²⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 9th January 1980, 0030, 2, 'Vladimir Pozner', p.2

²²⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 9th January 1980, 0030, 2, 'Vladimir Pozner', p.1-2

grain now not being sold to the Soviet Union – money supplied by the American taxpayer.²³⁰ The message was clear – the US citizen would suffer due to the actions of the US administration.

Continuing to focus on the implications of the grain embargo, an observer piece on the situation on 10th January created an image in the minds of the North American listener – ‘Carter has trained a double-barrelled gun on the Soviet Union, pressed the trigger and hit the American farmer.’²³¹ Not only did this visually encapsulate what Radio Moscow wanted listeners to think, but it also linked Carter with weaponry and aggression. Furthermore, this same unnamed observer argued that not only would farmers lose an export source, but the excess would lower the grain price by up to 30%, and the taxes the farmers pay would be used to pay the \$2.25 billion the White House had set aside for grain purchase anyway (down \$.25 billion in a day).²³² US farmers would pay doubly for an initiative meant to harm the Soviet Union. Radio Moscow failed to inform, or remind those who had seen the speech, that the President had addressed this though, when he said that ‘the undelivered grain will be removed from the market through storage and price support programs and through purchases at market prices.’²³³ Not once did the North American service imply that these measures would not be taken if the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan – it just made sure that listeners knew that there was resentment towards the policies within the US itself.

Listeners to the World Service heard a different stance towards the embargoes. This service created an air of doubt about the measures, announcing on 9th January that Congress was not unanimous in supporting them, and that the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture would examine the situation on 29th January.²³⁴ Not only did this suggest the embargoes caused divisions within the US government, but it also suggested to a worldwide listener base that they may not happen at all. Additionally, it also implied that President Carter was not in complete control of policy, that his words did not always mean actions. This was not repeated via the North American service.

Home service listeners were also subject to direct comment on the grain embargo. Alongside condemnation of the United States, reports about such issues as the dangerous consequences of

²³⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 9th January 1980, 2300, 4, p.11

²³¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 10th January 1980, 2300, 6, ‘Viktor Yanikeyev’, p.4

²³² Ibid

²³³ Carter, “Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan address to the Nation.”

²³⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 9th January 1980, 0900, 1.3

US actions or US subversive activity in Afghanistan, the grain embargo was criticised not for its effect on the Soviet Union, but for the anger it had generated within the United States. Supporting this claim, Radio Moscow reported that ‘farmers in Colorado State staged a demonstration’, and quoted the US Senator Ted Kennedy, *The Wall Street Journal*, the National Corn Growers Association, and Governor Edmund Brown.²³⁵ These all helped frame the embargo as not having popular support within the US.

To give the impression of international disapproval, there was also a report on the immediate French rejection of the embargoes, claiming the US actions could ‘...void all the achievements of détente.’²³⁶ However, unlike the North American service, which seemed to report discussion of the grain embargo above all else at this point, the Home service continued to prefer to inform listeners about criticism of President Carter’s speech, not about the specifics of it. Radio Moscow was attempting to get listeners to believe that it was part of one big anti-Soviet conspiracy, condemned around the world, and in the process ignoring the need to address the implications of the embargoes. One report claimed the ‘democratic public in various countries condemns the dirty campaign unleashed by imperialist circles over events in Afghanistan’, quoting sources from Ecuador, Turkey and Guyana in the process.²³⁷ Another report on the same day explained the ‘...truly hysterical reaction by the USA and other Western powers...’ to Afghanistan in terms of a failure of imperialist and reactionary policy in the area.²³⁸

Listeners in North America were not only exposed to claims the White House was harming the American public through the grain embargo, but that it was also using food as a foreign policy weapon. Withholding 17 million tons of grain from the Soviet Union was an, ‘unfriendly decision... [that] has been taken [and] indicates that Washington wants to continue to cash in on food deliveries for pressuring other countries in the interests of its foreign policy objectives.’²³⁹ Unsurprisingly, this argument also appeared in broadcasts to Africa.²⁴⁰ Emphasising the harm to ordinary people, the commentator claimed that President Carter, in announcing he would turn grain into fuel at a time when ‘almost two-thirds of mankind goes hungry or has insufficient

²³⁵ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 8th January 1980, 1816, ‘International Diary’, no.3

²³⁶ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 8th January 1980, 0900, no.7

²³⁷ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 8th January 1980, 1330, no.2

²³⁸ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 8th January 1980, 0200, no.17, p.2-3

²³⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 9th January 1980, 2300, 4, p.10

²⁴⁰ Despite being stored in the Radio Moscow box, this was labelled Radio Peace & Progress – IWM/C/216 RPP Eng Africa 8th January 1980, 1630, 5, p.3-4

food' was making a 'mockery of [the] principles of humanism, morals and justice about which Washington likes so much to talk about.'²⁴¹ Linking this to the past, the broadcast claimed,

*'It must be said that in Asia, Africa and Latin America the people are finding out by far not for the first time that the Americans prefer to destroy food products rather than sell them on the world market at cheaper prices or to supply them to countries that refuse to submit to Washington's political and economic dictate.'*²⁴²

Rather than consider Afghanistan as a reason for the embargo, the commentary informed listeners that it was due to US political and economic dictate. In pursuing the embargo, the US was being framed as the aggressor, and by shifting the topic onto starvation levels in the third world, and not problems that might be caused by the restrictions on grain going into the Soviet Union, it carefully shifted discussion away from a plan to counter Soviet actions in Afghanistan and made the policy look aggressive towards the third world. Listeners to the French African service were even given a history lesson on US foreign policy exploitation and developing countries -

*'After Vietnam, the USA now put economic and ideological pressure on the developing countries in order to preserve the positions of imperialism... hoping that détente would weaken liberation movements. But the latter intensified, and the US gunboat had failed.'*²⁴³

Whether trying to impose its ideology through gunboat diplomacy or trying to control food supplies, Radio Moscow was portraying the United States as a country single-mindedly focused on furthering itself at the expense of others - even if the claims made by the Soviet broadcaster were directly opposed to the claims made by the United States leadership. To take food as the example, Radio Moscow made clear the US embargo would harm developing countries, whereas President Carter actually made clear in his speech that the embargoed grain '...was not intended for human consumption... We will also increase amounts of grain devoted to the alleviation of hunger in poor countries.'²⁴⁴ His words and the words of Radio Moscow seem to directly conflict with one another – but as Radio Moscow did not quote him verbatim, it was not necessarily so important for areas of the world that lacked direct access to his statement.

²⁴¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RPP Eng Africa 8th January 1980, 1630, 5, p.3-4

²⁴² Ibid

²⁴³ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 9th January 1980, 1700, 2

²⁴⁴ Carter, "Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan address to the Nation."

Further, Radio Moscow seemed to suggest the US was embargoing all grain to the Soviet Union. Yet, this was not an outright ban on grain sales, as contractual commitments were to be honoured. Nor was it, Carter claimed, a restriction on grain for human consumption (although presumably human consumption would be involved later in the food chain). However, the Soviet broadcasters claimed otherwise, and used non-Soviet sources to support their argument. African listeners were told that *The Washington Post* had claimed,

*‘Carter’s decision to reduce the sale of grain to the Soviet Union is aimed also at limiting our [Soviet Union] country’s extension of aid to the developing countries with which we have long term agreements on co-operation.’*²⁴⁵

Whilst the idea that the Soviet Union imported grain to then redistribute to developing countries seems strange, it has to be considered against a backdrop of economic and trade warfare between the Soviet Union and the United States in the third world.²⁴⁶ The grain embargo frame was clear – it would harm the people. Localisation of the frame meant that US listeners heard about how it would harm producers, whilst listeners in developing countries, such as in Africa, heard how it would cause hunger to consumers.

Radio Moscow did not just omit key phrases from Carter’s speech; World Service listeners heard statements that were factually incorrect. President Carter was, it was claimed, embargoing ‘40 million tons of grain to the Soviet Union’.²⁴⁷ Radio Moscow did concede the embargo was an attempt to force the Soviet Union ‘to alter its stand on the question of help to Afghanistan’, however the broadcaster swiftly moved attention away from Afghanistan to focus listeners on the grain that was to be turned into gasohol, at a time of ‘famine on vast spaces of Africa, Asia and Latin America,... poor crops in dozens of developing countries and... children dying from hunger’.²⁴⁸ In addition, arguments about the cost of the embargo to the American farmer and the use of food as a weapon of policy were both reiterated.²⁴⁹ Listeners all around the world were left in no doubt what Carter was causing -

²⁴⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RPP Eng Africa 8th January 1980, 1630, 5, p.4

²⁴⁶ For discussions of Soviet trade with the world, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Melvyn P. Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), in particular Volume 2, Chapter 3, Hill, R., ‘Economic Aspects of the Cold War, 1962-1975’, Latham, M., ‘The Cold War in the Third World, 1963-1975’, and, Volume 3, Chapter 5, Zubok, V., ‘Soviet Foreign Policy from détente to Gorbachev, 1975-1985’

²⁴⁷ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 8th January 1980, 1300, 2.3

²⁴⁸ Ibid

²⁴⁹ Ibid

*'It's difficult to estimate at once the lives of how many starving people could be prolonged... the moral damage America will suffer will be immense...cars that will be soon zooming down American highways will be filled with fuel made out of grain needed desperately by millions of people.'*²⁵⁰

Again, the specifics of what President Carter said were set-aside, Radio Moscow wanted people all around the world to understand that President Carter was condemning millions to their doom with his embargo action. There was no suggestion here that the reason Carter may have refused to supply other regions with this grain was a fear that it would get to the Soviet Union anyway through an intermediary – thus bypassing all the millions who desperately needed it. By focusing on the third world, Radio Moscow shifted the grain embargo away from being a punishment to the Soviet Union and instead made it seem a dangerous policy that would cause harm elsewhere. There was no mention of how the embargo could hurt the Soviet Union; instead there was a focus on how the policy would damage US farmers, US taxpayers, and those starving in the third world.

4.3.2 *Arming Pakistan, threatening the Olympics?*

Writing in his memoirs about the actions taken against the Soviet Union at this time, Jimmy Carter said, 'To be effective, punitive action had to be broadly supported and clearly defined.'²⁵¹ Yet the measures put in place in January actually detracted from the reason behind them – Afghanistan. Via Radio Moscow certainly, the repercussions of the invasion were reported more than the invasion itself. Furthermore, the station did all it could to give listeners the impression that the punitive actions lacked any support, and were quick to clearly define how the actions would damage the USA, those who supported them, and innocent developing countries. Not the Soviet Union.

There was more to the speech than SALT-2 and grain though. Fishing and technology restrictions were announced by Carter but ignored by Radio Moscow; however, two other important points were made:

'Although the United States would prefer not to withdraw from the Olympic Games scheduled in Moscow...the Soviet Union must realise that its continued aggressive

²⁵⁰ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 8th January 1980, 1300, 2.3, p.4-5

²⁵¹ Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President.*, p.481

*actions will endanger both the participation of athletes and the travel to Moscow by spectators...*²⁵²

*'Along with other countries, we will provide military equipment, food, and other assistance to help Pakistan defend its independence and its national security against the seriously increased threat it now faces from the north.'*²⁵³

In his memoirs Carter claimed that a boycott '...would cause me the most trouble, and also would be the most severe blow to the Soviet Union.'²⁵⁴ As true as that was to become, his first flurry into the world of sporting boycotts was tame, it was more a suggestion than an actual threat, and it was overshadowed by the uproar over arming Pakistan and the grain embargo. Only the English language World and North American services carried any mention of the boycott, as mentioned in the speech. The North American service reported that, 'Olympic committees of over 120 countries have told the preparatory committee of the summer Olympics of their willingness to participate in the Moscow games.'²⁵⁵ The World Service carried slightly more, re-iterating the above but adding that in addition to the Mexican and Venezuelan Olympic Chairmen even the United States Olympic Committee President opposed the boycott, one that could 'destroy the Olympic movement'.²⁵⁶ US athletes and sports officials were also cited as 'almost unanimously' rejecting the suggestion of a boycott, whilst listeners heard that the Canadian Olympic Committee was willing to challenge its government in the event of a boycott.²⁵⁷ Within these announcements were the seeds of frames that would later be used to construct arguments against the boycott campaign, such as the 'quantity' frame and the 'divisive' frame, but at that moment the boycott was casually dismissed by Radio Moscow – it seems the Soviet broadcaster either considered the idea unlikely, or it was genuinely frightened into silence hoping any fuss made would quickly die down. The State of the Union speech just two weeks later swiftly changed this approach (4.3, The Speech).

Of more consequence initially was the military funding President Carter announced would be given to Afghanistan's neighbour, Pakistan. This supplied Radio Moscow with another opportunity to broadcast accusations of aggression although with questionable accuracy on the

²⁵² Carter, "Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan address to the Nation."

²⁵³ Ibid

²⁵⁴ Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President.*, p.484

²⁵⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 9th January 1980, 2300, 1.13

²⁵⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 9th January 1980, 1600, 1.12; on the US Olympic President see, IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 9th January 1980, 1500, 1.10; and, 8th January 1980, 1000, 1.9

²⁵⁷ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 8th January 1980, 1100 and 0900

specifics. North American audiences were informed on 5th January that the Pakistan leadership had rejected the offer of \$100,000,000 worth of military equipment, not because Pakistan's leader, Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, called this amount 'peanuts' and wanted more, but, in Radio Moscow's words,

*'Washington's offer should turn out to be a Greek gift...The Pakistani authorities realize that accepting the offer may well prompt neighbouring countries to doubt Pakistan's peaceful intentions and could start off a new spiral of the arms race in the region.'*²⁵⁸

This was a different version of events to that presented to Home service listeners. They were not informed that there had been an initial rejection, only that 'the President announced the granting of big allocations to Pakistan, for the purpose of encouraging incursion into Afghanistan from abroad.'²⁵⁹ This was the opposite of what Jimmy Carter had actually said. The arms were given, the station claimed, based on the President's,

*'false-impression that in giving aid to Afghanistan the Soviet Union is allegedly pursuing some other aims besides giving it support in repulsing the foreign aggression which is being carried out with the immediate involvement of the USA and China. Instead of halting the foreign aggression, the President has announced the allocation to Pakistan of large-scale appropriations intended to encourage the invasion of Afghanistan from outside.'*²⁶⁰

There was no mention to Soviet listeners of the haggling over the exact amount the US aid to Pakistan would total, merely that the military funding was designed for attack and not defence, and that President Carter was misrepresenting the situation in Afghanistan.

The English language service directed at Asian audiences also highlighted the dangers of this funding, but rather than consider the implications for Afghanistan, it localised it further by concentrating on Pakistan-India tensions. A BBC Monitor recorded a news report on the 6th January that firstly claimed \$150 million worth of weapons would be going to Pakistan, and secondly cited the Indian newspaper '*Financial Express*' as saying 'Washington's decision on additional supplies of sophisticated weaponry to Pakistan is aimed against India's national interests and security.'²⁶¹ One could surmise that the supplying of any US armaments to

²⁵⁸ IWM/SUC/216 RM N.AM 5th January 1980, 0001, 3, p.1-2.

²⁵⁹ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 6th January 1980, 0330, 'International Diary' 3, p.2, repeated 'International Observers at the Round table', 0800, part 2, p.10

²⁶⁰ Ibid

²⁶¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 6th January 1980, 1400, 1.4

Pakistan may well have been seen as passing on sophisticated technology to a less advanced military, but it is likely the word sophisticated was added to this statement only to make it seem more menacing. Localising the speech, Radio Moscow had portrayed President Carter's statement of defence as an aggressive act that would raise tension in the region – but not tension involving the Soviet Union.

The dangers of arming Pakistan were emphasised in broadcasts to listeners of the Arabic and Pashto language services immediately after the speech, on 5th January, and the Turkish service carried a report from *Pravda* about the dangers of US aid to Pakistan on 9th January – claiming Pakistan was very close to developing nuclear weapons.²⁶² However, whilst broadcasts in the vicinity of Pakistan told listeners of a state becoming dangerously armed, Radio Moscow used a different frame elsewhere – Pakistan was a launch pad for foreign subversives to attack the legitimate government of Afghanistan. This was the beginning of the use of the 'subversion' frame, one which concentrated on informing listeners which states were really behind the aggression in Afghanistan. The United States was always cast as a foreign subversive in these broadcasts; however who they were working with did vary depending on the target audience. For example, the Home service reported that it was the US and China providing '...constant military and financial assistance... to train the insurgents in special camps on Pakistani territory.'²⁶³ This was all part of the 'Pentagon's global strategic calculations...towards stepping up Chinese-American cooperation...'.²⁶⁴ The same statement, linked to a meeting between the US Secretary of Defence and Chinese leaders at this time, was also broadcast to listeners of the English language Asian service.²⁶⁵ The meeting was also noted by the North American service, who claimed China was actively involving itself in Afghanistan so it could profit from any potential collision between the Soviet Union and United States.²⁶⁶ Events were being placed in a wider context than just as a reaction to the Soviet actions in Afghanistan.

Localisation of these insurgents occurred in broadcasts via the Radio Moscow Arabic service – Egypt became a regular fixture at the side of the United States, and Israel was accused of intending to help the USA '...reinforce their positions in the Arab world in particular and the

²⁶² IWM/SU/F/: RM Arabic 5th January 1980, 1200, 1.3; RM Pashto 5th January 1980 1430, 1.2; Turkish 9th January 1980 1400, 1.1

²⁶³ IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 8th January 1980, 1816, 'International Diary', no.9

²⁶⁴ Ibid

²⁶⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 8th January 1980, 1400, 1.7

²⁶⁶ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 8th January 1980, 0001, 2

Islamic world in general...'²⁶⁷ That Pakistan was the base for these insurgencies was not mentioned via the Arabic service – perhaps to avoid suggestions that a primarily Islamic state was acting against the Soviet Union. British & Irish service listeners were told of British involvement several times, and not only after the Soviet invasion. On 9th January listeners were told the US broadcaster NBC had filmed 'Afghan counter-revolutionaries being trained in Pakistan... Their leaders have appealed for arms shipments to Britain'.²⁶⁸ This was also reported on the World Service. Before then though, on the 6th, listeners to the British service heard that, 'it was common knowledge that the CIA of the United States and the special services of Britain and China were arming terrorist gangs and military units and sending them into Afghanistan to crush the revolutionary government.'²⁶⁹ Radio Moscow's Britain & Ireland service had previously claimed that 'now that we know the facts about United States and British interference in Afghanistan... we can say in full confidence that had it not been for the interference, the young republic would be enjoying peace and order... and would not have had to seek Soviet military aid.'²⁷⁰ Not only were the British involved, but their involvement precipitated the request for Soviet assistance. Radio Moscow wanted listeners to understand that the US arms assistance to Pakistan was part of a long running saga, with partners local to the target audience – not because of Soviet actions in Afghanistan.

4.3.3 *Domestic Discontent, International Aggression, and the United Nations*

Radio Moscow initially focused Home service broadcasts on the decision to delay ratifying SALT-2; it took several days, and discussion about the grain embargo to take place, before other regional broadcasts followed suit. However, the frame used was much the same – US imperialism. The broadcaster argued the delay in ratification was ultimately part of a desire by the US Administration for US superiority and the need to look powerful in an election year. North American listeners were told that the delay,

'bears no relation to Afghanistan or Iran... it was borrowed from those who have long remained the opponents of SALT-2 talks and the treaty... at the bottom of their tactics

²⁶⁷ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 5th January 1980, 1700, 1. Egyptian help to the US is further outlined in broadcasts on 9th January 1980 1700, 4.3, p.2, and, 7th January 1980 1530, 1.5,

²⁶⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 9th January 1980, 2000, 1.3 [the statement is probably a mistype and should say shipments from Britain rather than to Britain]

²⁶⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 6th January 1980, 2000, 2, p.4

²⁷⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 4th January 1980, 2000, 2, p.3

*always lay and still lies the same old objective, the need to secure American superiority.*²⁷¹

Home service listeners were likewise informed that Carter had capitulated to the hawks in the American administration, was appealing to the US electorate in an election year, and had been condemned by the foreign press.²⁷² Listeners in Britain & Ireland heard *Izvestiya* accuse Carter of undermining détente, but, as with the claim that the US were acting up in an election year, they had also been told that Afghanistan was being exploited to hide British discontent at ‘...unpopular social and economic policies...’.²⁷³ Radio Moscow was trying to frame domestic issues, from electioneering to distracting from discontent, as the cause for the reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Elsewhere, Asian audiences were informed that Carter was ‘torpedoing the easing of tension’, and that the US and China were ‘...strikingly unanimous in trying to prevent by force the development of the movement for national independence in the region [Asia and the Far East].’²⁷⁴ Additionally, the English language Asian service claimed -

*‘The two countries have switched over from instigating the enemies of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan behind the scenes to open military support for these enemies. This fact shows once more where the real threat to the independence and freedom of the Afghan people comes from.’*²⁷⁵

US aggression, albeit without the explanation of domestic unrest, was also put to Arabic service listeners as a reason for the anti-Soviet actions -

*‘For some days now cries full of the spirit of aggression have been rising from Washington, President Carter and members of his Administration have turned on the apparatus of anti-Soviet propaganda and have lost all sense of reality and have begun to threaten the USSR and other socialist countries. The White House interferes in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and strives to impose on it what regime it should have and with whom it should deal and from whom it should seek help...’*²⁷⁶

²⁷¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 10th January 1980, 0001, ‘Stanislov Kondrashev’, p.1-3

²⁷² IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 10th January 1980, 1600, 6; 8th January 1980 1230, ‘Topical Problems of International Life’, part 3, p.2-3; 7th January 1980, 0500 and 0130.

²⁷³ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 9th January 1980, 2000, 1.6; 4th January 1980, 2000, 2

²⁷⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 9th January 1980, 1400, ‘The World Today’.

²⁷⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 10th January 1980, 1400, ‘Aleksandr Drushinin’, p.3

²⁷⁶ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 9th January 1980, 1830, ‘Aleksy Zlastorunskiy’, p.1

Linking this to US military actions in the Persian Gulf and the on-going Iranian hostage crisis, the same commentary claimed that,

*'The Afghani people had foiled those plans, as is known, with Soviet aid. In these circumstances in particular official Washington is trying to accuse the USSR of creating a tense situation in the Middle East, laying the blame thus on the innocent.'*²⁷⁷

Afghanistan, the Middle East, and the Soviet Union were not alone in suffering the forces of US imperialism, according to Radio Moscow. The broadcaster made sure listeners were also aware of the problems surrounding potential deployment of US nuclear missiles in Turkey, West Germany and Britain. Reports labelled NATO and the missiles as, variously, 'for strategic use against the socialist countries...was an obvious move to counteract the easing of tensions', was a 'dangerous path' for NATO to follow, and 'anti-détente'.²⁷⁸ In a West European-wide broadcast that appears to have concentrated on the 8th January, the dangers of NATO missiles were further mentioned in broadcasts in Greek, Swedish, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, French and English.²⁷⁹ Eastern Europe also heard about the missile threat, but not as comprehensively as across Western Europe at this time. The cynicism of NATO ('that aggressive bloc') was discussed in a Serb-Croat broadcast on 8th January, but other comment on the NATO missile threat appeared on various days – roundups of international protests appeared in Hungarian on 10th January, but most of all on or around 28th December 1979, when comments appeared in Polish, Macedonian, Finnish, Bulgarian and Czech-Slovak.²⁸⁰ These all portrayed an aggression on the part of the United States and her allies, helpfully juxtaposing the Soviet Union actions in Afghanistan and elsewhere, for example with 'the Soviet policy of peace reflected in... the latest disarmament proposals made by Brezhnev in Berlin.'²⁸¹

Clearly, Radio Moscow perceived NATO as being dominated by the United States, and this may have encouraged the body to be reported via an aggressive frame. The United Nations was

²⁷⁷ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 9th January 1980, 1830, 'Aleksey Zlastorunskiy', p.2

²⁷⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 1st January 1980, 2000, 'Glance at the British Scene', p.3; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 7th January 1980, 1300, 'News and Views', p.2; 8th January 1980, 2100 and 4th January 1980, 1500; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 8th January 1980, 1730, 'For a Europe of Peace and Security'.

²⁷⁹ IWM/SU/D/212: RM Greek 8th January 1980, 1600; RM Swedish 8th January 1980, 1900; RM Italian 8th January 2100, RM Spanish 8th January 1980, 2000; RM Port Europe 8th January 1980, 1930; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 8th January 1980, 1730; IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 8th January 1980, 2000

²⁸⁰ IWM/SU/E/175: RM Serb-Croat 8th January 1980, 2030, 1.9; RM Hungarian 10th January 1980, 1800, 3; RM Polish 28th December 1979, 1500, 3; RM Macedonian 28th December 1979, 1800, 1.2; IWM/SU/E/174 RM Finnish 28th December 1979, 1630; RM Bulgarian 28th December 1979, 1630; RM Czech 28th December 1979, 1600;

²⁸¹ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 8th January 1980, 1730, 'For a Europe of Peace and Security'.

a different matter though. The UN Security Council meeting to discuss Afghanistan ended in a Soviet veto, but Radio Moscow offered no criticism of it meeting. The upcoming UN General Assembly meeting, in which the Soviet Union held no veto, was described to Home Service listeners as wishing to discuss ‘the so-called Afghan question’.²⁸² All this audience had heard of the previous Security Council meeting was from a review of *Pravda* on 9th January, mentioning how representatives including those from Zaire, Panama, Bangladesh and Yugoslavia had voted ‘in support of the US position and attacked the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan...’.²⁸³ Radio Moscow reported this not as an attack upon Soviet actions, but upon Afghanistan itself – luckily, listeners heard, the Soviet Union used its veto to provide neighbourly assistance and defend Afghanistan. Listeners in North America were informed just as simply, and with no talk of a further meeting – the Security Council had ‘completed discussion on Afghanistan’.²⁸⁴ Troyanovskiy, the Soviet Ambassador to the UN, was also quoted as saying that ‘the Security Council... discussion... means interference in Afghanistan affairs.’²⁸⁵ This was repeated via the World Service, the Britain & Ireland service, and in various European broadcasts.²⁸⁶ Away from Europe, Troyanovskiy’s speech was also used to promote the Soviet view about Afghan interference, being heard via the Arabic, Turkish and even Pashto services.²⁸⁷ The Swahili, Arabic and Finnish services also carried negative comment on the UN meeting, citing the Afghan Foreign Ministers ‘castigation of the US for raising the question of Afghanistan at the UN’.²⁸⁸ Radio Moscow accused the UN of interfering, but it did not go into detail over the reasons the UN put for this ‘interference’.

4.4 FRAMES USED TO REPORT THE INITIAL EXCHANGES

Radio Moscow was very particular in what and how it reported the initial international exchanges in the weeks after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Soviet international broadcasting wanted to concentrate attention not on the invasion itself, or troop movements, but

²⁸² IWM/SU/B/521/ RM Home 9th January 1980, 0400, ‘*Pravda* Review’, 13.

²⁸³ Ibid

²⁸⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 8th January 1980, 2300, 1.2

²⁸⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.AM 6th January 1980, 2300, 1.2 and also 5th January 1980 2300, 1.1

²⁸⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 5th January 1980, 2100, 1.1; IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 6th January 1980, 2000, 1.2; IWM/SU/E/174: RM Finnish 6th January 1980, 1630; RM German 6th January 1980, 2000, 1.2; IWM/SU/D/212: RM Spanish 5th January 1980, 2200, 5.1; RM Italian 6th January 1980, 2100

²⁸⁷ IWM/SU/F/: RM Arabic 6th January 1980, 1530; Turkish 6th January 1980, 1400; RM Pashto 6th January 1980, 1430

²⁸⁸ IWM/SU/F/ RM Swahili 4th January 1980, (no time given); IWM/SU/E/174 RM Finnish 5th January 1980, 1630; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 6th January 1980, 1700 (both Dost and Troyanovskiy are mentioned here), and IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 5th January 1980, 1200

on alternative reasons for the international reaction. Radio Moscow used a range of frames and methods to achieve this, whilst also hinting at frames that become more prominent in later chapters as the Olympic boycott campaign slowly dominated the airwaves.

The first frame to appear was personification, highlighting what Radio Moscow perceived to be the former Afghan President Amin's role in causing disorder in the state. This helped to justify the Soviet intervention, whilst also neatly juxtaposing against the personification of the Soviet-installed Babrak Karmal as a saviour of Afghanistan. The assistance frame also quickly appeared, supported with references to the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Friendship and the UN Charter. These initial frames suggested a localised event, it was only with the full introduction of the imperialism frame, and the related historical and aggression frames that a more international approach, one focused on the United States as a major cause of problems in the region, began to be emphasised in broadcasts. As has been shown in this case study, these developed through a gradual shift in the reporting, from concentrating on Amin and Afghanistan, to criticism of foreign coverage (the misrepresentation frame) until Radio Moscow began to focus on the reasons behind the foreign coverage and foreign reaction.

Whilst the personification, assistance, or misrepresentation frames were prominent at particular times here, it is worth noting that there was an underlying and persistent use of the imperialism frame throughout – the commentaries before the actual invasion took place show pre-existing links between problems in Afghanistan and the United States and China. This suggests that Radio Moscow was already priming listeners, building a base on which to put forward later claims about Hafizullah Amin and to help justify the Soviet assistance. This also helped place the Afghanistan war, and the reaction to it, within a longer running theme – that of the Cold War itself. Concentrating on the 'real' reasons behind the reaction, by linking the reaction to domestic concerns, was a clear attempt to dissuade listeners from blaming the Soviet Union. Placing events within a wider historical frame was also used as a means to achieve this. In addition, the broadcaster used the 'people harm' frame to show how the US actions would harm ordinary people, thus bringing what many may have seen as a political battle of words down to a more human level. It appears that the goal of Radio Moscow was not to report the situation in Afghanistan, but to work on convincing listeners that the Soviet Union was blameless and had acted within the law – the situation was being misrepresented by foreign groups as a pretext to unleash or distract attention from other areas or actions.

Already in the broadcasting on Afghanistan, there were distinct differences in how Radio Moscow portrayed events to different target audiences. The grain embargo reporting most clearly demonstrated this, with a clear differentiation between broadcasts to those the Soviet

broadcaster evidently considered producers and those considered consumers. Broadcasts to ‘producers’, such as North America, concentrated on reporting how the grain embargo would harm profits, to ‘consumers’, such as listeners in Africa, the frame was on starvation. There was no mention of any possible harm to listeners within the Soviet Union. The other key parts of President Carter’s speech were also localised, be it concentrating on the Persian Gulf in Arabic broadcasts, considering the harm arming Pakistan would do to India-Pakistan relations for listeners in Asia, or implying to Home service listeners that it was all part of the long standing US goal of encircling the Soviet Union. The main theme was to condemn the foreign reaction to the Soviet intervention, but it is clear Radio Moscow approached this differently depending on the target audience.

This case study has introduced several of the methods that Radio Moscow used to help develop and reinforce the frames used. Chief amongst these was the method of reporting on sources that would unlikely be available to the target audience. This does not necessarily mean the citations were false, but it does raise questions as to why this was the case. *Pravda* was the exception, being quoted across the network including to Home service listeners. The other key method was to avoid direct quotations from foreign statements, such as those by President Carter. This meant that unless the target audience had direct access to the original statement, Radio Moscow was free to frame these statements in almost any manner it chose. Linked to this, the broadcaster also exaggerated certain facts, such as the amounts involved in the grain embargo, helping to reinforce the frames it was using to portray the situation to listeners.

Alongside the frames outlined here, Radio Moscow also introduced the ‘quantity’ and ‘divisive’ frames, both with regard to the Olympic boycott suggestion. These emerging frames will become more prominent in later chapters, but they are worth noting here because the comparable lack of their use emphasises the focus of Radio Moscow on other frames at this time. There was more concentration on deflecting attention from Afghanistan and the damage the immediate embargoes could do rather than on the potential harm the boycott of a sporting event to be held in seven months’ time.

CHAPTER 5

BOYCOTT RUMOURS BECOME REALITY: HOW SOVIET RADIO FRAMED THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

Throughout January 1980, criticism of the Soviet actions in Afghanistan continued to appear worldwide. However, there was a lack of action, as states did not want to act alone and were concerned about possible repercussions. To take Britain as an example, the Foreign Minister, Douglas Hurd, told the House of Commons,

*‘Any economic measures are likely to have some effect on people in this country. That is why it is essential that such measures should be, so far as is humanly possible, taken together with other countries... we cannot say that we will take no action in the economic context.’*²⁸⁹

The same concerns were visible in discussions of the Olympic Games. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, on 17th January 1980, told the House of Commons –

*‘No firm decision has yet been taken. The government are currently discussing this possibility with our major international partners. We certainly favour in principle the removal of the Games from Moscow and believe the only chance of achieving this is by a concerted approach to the International Olympic Committee.’*²⁹⁰

A NATO council meeting on 15th January recorded similar sentiments – Italy had instigated some measures against the Soviets, but they would be prepared to consider other economic measures, ‘if there was solidarity amongst alliance members’.²⁹¹ Turkey, suffering economic difficulties, ‘would find it very difficult to join in economic measures against the Soviet Union and sees no value in making gestures in this area which have no substance’.²⁹² Denmark and the Netherlands agreed not to undercut the US action on grain; many others, such as Norway, France and West Germany cancelled or postponed bilateral visits, and others, such as Canada, decided to study how they could ‘tighten up’ trade with the Soviet Union.²⁹³ With regard to the

²⁸⁹ *Hansard*, House of Commons Debate, 14th January 1980, vol.976, cc1222-33 ‘Afghanistan’, Line 1229 – Mr Hurd answers Mr Bottomley

²⁹⁰ *Hansard*, House of Commons Debate, 17th January 1980, vol.976, cc.794-5W

²⁹¹ TNA/FCO/13/967/78 ‘North Atlantic Council Meeting on Afghanistan, 15th January 1980’

²⁹² *Ibid*

²⁹³ *Ibid*

Olympics, Greece was said to be considering offering a permanent Olympic site within its borders, and Belgium, Canada and Norway were considering their actions over the Olympic Games.²⁹⁴ From grain to the Games, January 1980 was a time of discussion, not action.

However, the broadcasting of three significant events at this time provides real insight into the workings of Radio Moscow, how it framed and localised news. This chapter covers broadcasts between 15th-31st January 1980, allowing for examination of the reporting of the major statements made by the United Nations General Assembly (14th January 1980), the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (29th January 1980), and the United States President (23rd January 1980). Jimmy Carter's State of the Union address had the most significant and long running repercussions on Afghanistan and the Olympic Games – where others were busy proposing studies and signals of intent, the US President was initiating action. However, the comparative difference in how Radio Moscow reported the UNGA and Islamic Conference resolutions is what this chapter concentrates on first.

5.1 THE UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION AND THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

On 14th January 1980, the United Nations General Assembly issued resolution ES/6-2, 'The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security'.²⁹⁵ Key to this resolution was point four –

*'[The General Assembly] calls for the immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan in order to enable its people to determine their own form of government and choose their economic, political and social systems free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever.'*²⁹⁶

Whilst this resolution was certainly aimed at the Soviet actions, it was couched in language that avoided direct condemnation, calling as it does for the withdrawal of foreign troops and outside intervention, not specifically Soviet. The phrasing used had many parallels with Soviet comments on the role of other states in Afghanistan. In contrast, an 'Extraordinary Meeting of The Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers' was called for 27th-29th January 1980. Unlike the

²⁹⁴ TNA/FCO/13/967/78 'North Atlantic Council Meeting on Afghanistan, 15th January'

²⁹⁵ "UN General Assembly - Sixth Emergency Special Session, Resolution ES-6/2, 1980."

²⁹⁶ Ibid

United Nations proposal, this resulted in clear condemnation of the Soviet (not just foreign) involvement in Afghanistan – resolution 1/EOS stated that the conference –

‘1. Condemns the Soviet military aggression against the Afghani people, denounces and deplores it as a flagrant violation of international laws, covenants, and norm...

2. Demands the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Soviet troops... and reiterates that Soviet troops should refrain from acts of oppression and tyranny against the Afghani people...’²⁹⁷

However, these two similar statements were reported very differently, and give an insight into how the Soviet Union perceived the relative strength of each body at this time.

The initial resolution placed before the UN Security Council (which was reported through a frame of interference led by the United States) was reported by Radio Moscow as an attack upon Afghanistan rather than the Soviet Union. The broadcaster reported that the Soviet Union came to the aid of Afghanistan by vetoing the resolution. However, with no veto in the General Assembly, the Soviet Union could do nothing to stop the Emergency Session of 10th-14th January passing a resolution condemning foreign intervention in Afghanistan. There was no Soviet victory here and no reporting of the resolution. What is surprising is that Radio Moscow did not try to frame the General Assembly meeting in a manner that correlated with Soviet actions, as the language of the resolution opened itself up to interpretation. ES-6/2 may have stemmed from an obvious inability to get a condemnation of the Soviet actions in Afghanistan through the Security Council, but its failure to mention the Soviet Union at all could have been used by Soviet broadcasting to highlight who *they* considered the foreign troops in Afghanistan to be. In a letter to Margaret Thatcher just days after the invasion, Brezhnev made clear that,

‘The Soviet Union has not at all interfered and does not interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan which are settled by the Afghans themselves... as soon as the reasons which caused the request of Afghanistan to the Soviet Union cease to exist we intend to withdraw completely... If a real care is to be taken about the interests of the people of Afghanistan, one should above all contribute to the ending of armed invasion from outside... And it is here that Britain could do something if it so wished.’²⁹⁸

²⁹⁷ Resolution 1/EOS The Soviet Military Intervention in Afghanistan and on its Ensuing Effects, 27th-29th January 1980

²⁹⁸ TNA PREM 19/134/ ‘Call by the Soviet Ambassador’, pages following on are Brezhnev’s letter to Thatcher, serial number noted as T3/1980.

If those directing Radio Moscow had chosen to do so, they could have combined the views of their leader with the vagueness of the resolution and told listeners via Radio Moscow that the aims of the UN were the aims of the Soviet Union. The UN also respected Afghan sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, deplored armed intervention in Afghanistan, and wanted foreign troops removed – Radio Moscow could have reemphasised the claim that the Soviet troops were only in Afghanistan at the invitation of the government to further similar objectives. The opportunity was there, but Radio Moscow did not take it.

This starkly contrasts with the frames used by Radio Moscow to report the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, the second largest inter-governmental organisation, which, at the end of January, also issued a resolution condemning Soviet actions in Afghanistan.²⁹⁹ Silence may have been the response to the UN resolution, but attacking the credentials and motives of the attendees was the way the station reported the Islamic Conference resolution.

Even beforehand, the conference was reported to North American and Asian audiences as convening under pressure from the USA, and that it would consider only Afghanistan.³⁰⁰ This can be considered as a subset of the imperialism frame in that it showed US control over others. Home service listeners were told -

‘As is known the initiators of this meeting – amongst whom are Egypt, Oman, and Pakistan, acting on the bidding of Washington – intend to make the main point on the agenda the so-called Afghan question. They are not concealing their plans to transfer the conference into a platform for anti-Soviet and anti-Afghan propaganda.’³⁰¹

Reporting the conference in this manner meant that the Soviet audience was primed to receive any criticism of the Soviet Union and the actions in Afghanistan in an almost dismissive manner – if they accepted the view put across by Radio Moscow then they could dismiss it as merely a US-led anti-Soviet event that held no meaning.

After the conference condemned the invasion of Afghanistan though, listeners to Radio Moscow services in North America, Britain & Ireland, the Soviet Union and Africa were informed that the Islamic Conference ‘adopted a resolution that is blatant interference in Afghan internal

²⁹⁹ NGO Law Monitor, “Organization of Islamic Cooperation,” accessed September 12, 2013, <http://www.icnl.org/research/monitor/oic.html>.

³⁰⁰ IWM/SU/C/216: RM N.Am 26th January 1980, 2300, 1.4; RM Eng Asia 27th January 1980, 1400 & 1500, 1.4

³⁰¹ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 27th January 1980, 0310, 1.5

affairs'.³⁰² More detail was given in broadcasts to Asian regions and also in broadcasts in Arabic, presumably because of the prominence of Islam in those areas, but this extra detail did not tell listeners what the resolution actually said. Instead, the broadcaster encouraged Arabic service listeners to consider the reasons behind it,

*'The extraordinary session of the Islamic Congress has clearly disappointed the hopes of its initiators and organisers, Washington in particular. The American administration wanted to exploit the session to draw the Islamic countries to the anti-Soviet provocative ado stirred by it, about events in Iran and Afghanistan... resolutions constitute a flagrant interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and in fact benefit American imperialism.'*³⁰³

Whilst other areas described it merely as 'blatant interference', the more detailed attacks made on the Islamic Conference via the Radio Moscow Arabic broadcast service highlight how Soviet broadcasting was determined to portray the resolution as based on imperialism, not religion.

Other broadcasts to Asia in English reinforced the portrayal of the United States as the real instigator, again trying to avoid the conference resolution being framed around religion –

*'Of late American diplomacy has been engaged in intrigues around the special Islamic conference held in Islamabad. The intrigues are aimed at grossly distorting the events in Afghanistan, in posing them as a threat to other Moslem countries.'*³⁰⁴

The same commentary also continued by throwing the words used by the US President in his State of the Union address right back at him – 'Witness the United States massing of warships, the biggest since world war two, in the vicinity of Iranian shores...'³⁰⁵. It concluded with an appeal to those engaged in the Islamic Conference, to 'help it realise the true purpose of the manoeuvres American diplomacy is engaged in'.³⁰⁶ This conference, with its criticisms of the Soviet Union, was consistently portrayed as an instrument of the United States – unlike the silence that surrounded the UNGA resolution.

³⁰² IWM/SU/C/216: RM N.Am, 29th January 1980, 2300 1.4 ; RM GBI, 30th January 1980, 2000, 1.1; IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home, 27th January 1980, 1200, point 8; IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 30th January 1980, 2000, 1.1;

³⁰³ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 30th January 1980, 1700, 1.2

³⁰⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 29th January 1980, 1400, 2.3

³⁰⁵ Ibid

³⁰⁶ Ibid

Discussion of the conference did not just focus on the United States; Radio Moscow tried to exploit existing tensions by making Israel a major consideration in broadcasts to Asian and Arabic regions. Washington was trying to 'distract the Arabs from solving their main problem: elimination of the traces of Israeli aggression and recovery of the national rights of the Palestinian people.'³⁰⁷ Afghanistan, it seems, was a distraction from the real issues, the threat to Arab and Islamic peace and security -

*'...alliance and cooperation between Egypt, the US and Israel are [word indistinct] of aggression against the Palestinian people and a threat to the security and independence of all Arab and Islamic countries.'*³⁰⁸

A broadcast to both North America and Britain & Ireland also claimed that the 'President of the Afghan Council of Mullahs says Muslims in Afghanistan have no reason to fear interference in their religious life because of the presence of Soviet troops.'³⁰⁹ It was upon these building blocks that Soviet radio moved on to criticism of the Islamic Conference itself, a conference that all true Muslim patriots were apparently against, and one that would, according to Radio Moscow, prefer to discuss Jerusalem than Afghanistan.³¹⁰ Again, the argument was clear – discussion of Afghanistan was forced upon the conference proceedings. Home service listeners heard that the US was attempting '...to portray its expansionist aims in the Middle East as a defence of the rights of the Muslims in Afghanistan...'.³¹¹ Similarly, listeners to the Arabic service heard about 'celebration of the Prophet's birthday at Moscow's mosque'.³¹² There was a clear contrasting of positions: the Soviet Union was helpful, the United States exploitative.

Condemning the Islamic Conference as instigated by American imperialists and avoiding perceived religious criticism contrasted with a broader attempt by the Soviet broadcasters to portray the Soviet Union as the true friend of Islam. In Soviet radio attempts to defend the invasion of Afghanistan and show the situation within that country as normal they often took a religious angle. Before the Islamic Conference had even convened, it was made clear in broadcasts to Africa that the new Afghan government had,

³⁰⁷ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 30th January 1980, 1700, 1.2

³⁰⁸ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 30th January 1980, 1700, 1.2

³⁰⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 20th January 1980, 2000, 1.2

³¹⁰ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 25th January 1980, 0130, IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 25th January 1980, 1600

³¹¹ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 26th January 1980, 0600, 'Central Press Review', no.7

³¹² IWM/SU/F/RM Arabic 31st January 1980, 1200, 4

*'never disavowed Islam...the majority of public meetings in Afghanistan begin with Koran recitation. Islam is being taught in schools; believers celebrate all the religious feasts proscribed by Islam. All the 40,000 mosques are open in Afghanistan.'*³¹³

There was a two pronged approach to the Islamic Conference. Firstly, it framed the conference resolution as a product of American imperialism and its regional puppets. Secondly, broadcasts focused on Asian and Islamic regions promoted Soviet credentials with regard to Islamic worship and religious freedom. It seems both frames were designed to dispel any ideas that what was going on in Afghanistan was a war with religious connotations.

On top of this, the contrasting coverage shows the difference between Soviet opinion of the United Nations, in which the Soviet Union was a member with significant influence, and the Islamic Conference, in which it was not a member. The UN appears to have been too influential to criticise, and because the Soviet Union was a permanent member of the Security Council, it was not open to the same levels of imperialist accusations that could be levelled at what it appears Radio Moscow considered the less significant Islamic Conference. It must also be considered that these contrasting reporting styles could also be related to when the announcements were made. The UNGA resolution came at a time when Radio Moscow perhaps hoped the uproar around Afghanistan would die down, and therefore chose to help this process by neglecting to report the news. The Islamic Conference resolution was announced several days after the US President had made his highly significant State of the Union address – thus it was clear then that the uproar would not die down and Radio Moscow felt it had to act. However, the case studies that follow point more toward the first point, as Radio Moscow was never afraid to comment on Islamic Conference statements, whereas it tended towards silence if anything critical came from the United Nations.

5.2 THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS – A DISASTER FOR CARTER?

Within a week of the UN resolution condemning Soviet actions through words, Radio Moscow had to contend with the US President re-iterating the actions he announced in his 'Address to the Nation on Afghanistan' condemning the invasion, and in particular adding emphasis to the Moscow Olympic Games boycott threat. The boycott threat hit the headlines just days before, when on 20th January 1980, President Carter appeared on NBC television's *Meet the Press* show, and told the United States, the world, and the Kremlin, that if the Soviet Union did not

³¹³ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 17th January 1980, 1700 2, p.2

withdraw from Afghanistan by 19th February 1980, the US team would not appear at the Moscow Olympics. On 23rd January 1980, the President reiterated this in his State of the Union address –

‘...I have notified the Olympic Committee that with Soviet invading forces in Afghanistan, neither the American people nor I will support sending an Olympic team to Moscow.’³¹⁴

With a further statement announcing US policy in the oil rich Persian Gulf, the State of the Union address tried to reignite the reaction to Afghanistan.³¹⁵ Yet it is questionable what it actually achieved. The speech was undeniably shaped by the invasion, but it also created an opportunity for Radio Moscow to divert attention from the troops in Afghanistan and try to divert ill feeling away from the Soviet Union itself. Radio Moscow reported this pivotal moment by focusing not on what was said, but rather the reasons the Soviet broadcaster believed were behind what was said.

The address made it clear that Soviet Union aggression had led to the sanctions, the threat to boycott the Olympics, and the US determination to defend the vital oil fields of the Persian Gulf, dubbed the ‘Carter Doctrine’ -

‘An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.’³¹⁶

The most comprehensive analysis of the speech delivered to North American audiences, by Radio Moscow News Analyst Stanislav Kondreshov, appeared a full eight days after the address, and immediately focused on the Persian Gulf statement. The first line of his broadcast noted that, ‘The White House is again threatening to use armed forces thousands of miles from American shores to protect American interests.’³¹⁷ In terms of introducing the listener to US actions, the word ‘again’ was a trigger for linking this to previous US endeavours, Vietnam for example. The report went on to consider the ‘humorous or sarcastic side’ of the doctrine, by arguing that,

‘...is not the United States itself a foreign power in this region, and does not the threat made by the American President, the threat to be backed up by aircraft carriers, airborne

³¹⁴ Carter, “The State of the Union address, 23rd January 1980.”

³¹⁵ Carter, “Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan address to the Nation.”

³¹⁶ Carter, “The State of the Union address, 23rd January 1980.”

³¹⁷ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 31st January 1980, 0001, 2.

*divisions and marines represent an attempt by a foreign power to establish its control?*³¹⁸

In itself, this is an interesting example of a frame used by Soviet broadcasting to report certain statements. There can be no doubt that the answer to the rhetorical question was indeed, yes, the US was a foreign power. And there was no denial about Soviet involvement, or potential involvement, in the Gulf region. However, Radio Moscow reacted to the speech by focusing on how it showed United States aggression. The Radio Moscow commentator also expanded upon the phrase ‘military force’, breaking it down into constituent parts – ‘...aircraft carriers, airborne divisions and marines...’ The frame was one of aggression, as Radio Moscow continued to emphasise it was the United States, and not the Soviet Union, that was responsible for the raising of world tensions.

The key frame for reporting the address came after this though. For American listeners wondering why their President had announced these measures Radio Moscow had a very clear answer. Criticising the grain embargo in one sentence, the broadcaster concentrated on the Persian Gulf and informed listeners that –

*‘Statements coming from the White House indicate that the United States is not only embarking on a course of confrontation, a course fraught with adventurism on the world scene, although on the American scene it strengthens – for the time being – Jimmy Carter’s election chances. They also indicate that the men in the White House still think of themselves as masters of the world.’*³¹⁹

Electioneering and implied imperialist plans were the arguments Radio Moscow used to frame the content of the State of the Union address to the voters of the United States. This also built upon the notion of Afghanistan being a pretext for other actions, despite not being mentioned.

The notion of ‘the Persian Gulf’ was also considered in this piece, with Kondreshov describing it as a ‘fog’, intentionally spread so there was space for ‘manoeuvre, blackmail and bluff’, and also because no single country in the Middle East had apparently asked for US support.³²⁰ Radio Moscow was trying to make it clear that the US Administration was imposing itself on an area that was deliberately ill-defined. With the Persian Gulf statement, it almost seems as if President

³¹⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 31st January 1980, 0001, 2.

³¹⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 31st January 1980, 2300, 2.

³²⁰ Ibid

Carter included an escape clause for Soviet reporting in his speech – it did not have to discuss Afghanistan.

The Olympic boycott part of the address was briefly dealt with in a separate, earlier, broadcast, but whilst it was also reported as related to domestic issues, in this case electioneering, it was played down somewhat by being incorporated into the wider framework of US aggression. In a radio discussion on 27th January, one of the participants announced:

*'The whole international situation is simply being used by the President today for as far as I'm concerned, a supreme political purpose, and that is to be re-elected... you see a President whose popularity sagged so low not long ago, and today who many think is riding a wave, thanks to this new possibility... The Olympic Games are just one of the cards that are being played, one of the ways to play on people's emotions inside the United States.'*³²¹

The commentary continued with other participants agreeing that the Olympic boycott was merely a threat grounded in domestic US politics, but it also included an extra twist for the audience to consider –

*'I see it as part of a definite tendency on the part of the United States administration to turn away from the situation we had during the early 70s and the mid-seventies...to a situation – well, that resembles that of the cold war, and I see this attack on the Olympics, the situation of the US administration... as part of a whole series of events over the past couple of years intended to turn back the clock and take us back to those very difficult years of brinkmanship.'*³²²

The boycott threat was being presented to North American listeners through the frames of domestic issues and international aggression. This built upon a previous commentary, in which avid listeners heard -

*'There is no doubt about it that one reason for the political hue and cry of the past few weeks, forced on the public and blown out of all proportion by the current administration, is a desire to distract Americans from their basic problems so as to improve the Administration's chances for re-election.'*³²³

³²¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 27th January 1980, 2300, 3, 'Thinking Out Loud'.

³²² Ibid

³²³ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 26th January 1980, 2300, 2, 'Moscow Viewpoint'.

Immediately after the address, Radio Moscow accused Carter of attempting to ‘turn a regional conflict into a world crisis, [and will], whatever the outcome of a November election, worsen the international atmosphere for a long time and may even bring confrontation nearer.’³²⁴ To listeners in North America, the instigator of the aggression was President Carter, not the United States as a whole. Not only was this an example of the personification frame being used, but it is also an example of the emerging ‘divisive’ frame, one that tried to separate the government from the people, blaming the former whilst portraying the latter as innocent.

Again, this built upon a previous report that told North American listeners Afghanistan was not the cause of ‘the current aggravation of international affairs’, but a useful opportunity the United States administration was trying to exploit.³²⁵ It concluded -

*‘The Soviet Union’s aid to Afghanistan has not caused the current difficulties in international affairs... President Leonid Brezhnev told an interviewer for the Soviet daily ‘Pravda’ that if it had not been for the events in Afghanistan certain circles in the United States and in NATO would have certainly found another pretext to aggravate international relations. They have had plenty of experience.’*³²⁶

The final sentence was perhaps put in as a primer for the audience to consider other examples. Afghanistan was again presented as a pretext for anti-Soviet measures, reinforcing a frame Radio Moscow had used almost since the invasion itself.

The same frame for the State of the Union address was put to listeners within the Soviet Union. Four days after the speech, on 27th January, Radio Moscow’s New York correspondent Andrey Sturum reported to Soviet listeners that,

*‘Long before the so-called Carter doctrine was proclaimed, the USA had begun to concentrate a powerful naval detachment in the Arabian Sea... This major force has been put together to exert military pressure on the Persian Gulf countries...’*³²⁷

Implicit within this was both US imperialism and the view that the Carter Doctrine was pre-planned – recent events, such as troops entering Afghanistan, were not the reason for the proclamation, they were pretexts. However, it does appear that broadcasts within the Soviet Union itself were more liable to discuss than ignore Afghanistan, perhaps because many

³²⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 24th January 1980, 2300, 2.

³²⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 23rd January 1980, 2300, 2

³²⁶ Ibid

³²⁷ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 27th January 1980, 2030, 5.

listeners may have known troops deployed there. Rather than discuss troop movements though, these broadcasts focused on describing Afghanistan as an excuse for ‘the most shameful slander’, and the State of the Union address was ‘...evidence of the fact that extremist circles of the United States are stepping up their attempts to torpedo international détente.’³²⁸ Radio Moscow broadcasts within the Soviet Union did not emphasise re-election as an argument for President Carter’s words in quite the same way as North American broadcasts. This domestic issue was only presented occasionally as a further reason for Washington’s actions, the primary frame reporting the State of the Union address instead being the US aggression destroying détente.

Continuing the aggressive frame, President Carter’s reaffirmation of the trade sanctions was further condemned in the Home service broadcasting. In what appears to have been both a dismissal of the damage trade restrictions could do to the Soviet Union and also a reassuring message to listeners fearing the worst, one broadcast quoted an American President of the Farm Bureau Federation as saying, ‘Mr Carter aimed at the Russians from a double-barrelled gun: he pulled the trigger and hit the American farmer.’³²⁹ This is almost a word-for-word repeat of a phrase used in an observer piece on 10th January (see chapter 4.3 p.73-74).³³⁰ The trade sanctions were reported with the personalisation frame (i.e. President Carter specifically and not the US Administration, Washington or the general public) and the people harm frame (the American farmer). Reassuring Soviet listeners that the anti-Soviet measures would not harm them, a further broadcast to listeners reinforced this idea -

*‘...the overwhelming majority of sober-minded politicians have no doubts that the attempts to blackmail the Soviet Union may most painfully of all hit the initiators of this undertaking.’*³³¹

To help support the ‘people harm’ frame, Radio Moscow quoted sources from foreign states such as the United States. Soviet listeners heard claims that the State of the Union address would have, according to firstly American Senator Howard Baker and secondly the President of the National Association of Maize Producers (USA), a ‘...pernicious effect on US agriculture’, and that ‘...the gravest blow has been inflicted on the interests of American farmers...’.³³² The

³²⁸ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 27th January 1980, 0800, ‘International Observers at the Round Table’.

³²⁹ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 25th January 1980, 1800, no.7

³³⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 10th January 1980, 2300, 6, ‘Viktor Yanikev’, p.4

³³¹ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 27th January 1980, 0800

³³² IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 27th January 1980, 0800

Wall Street Journal was also cited as believing that the grain embargo would ‘harm the American economy and farmers, above all.’³³³ Whilst farmers lost out most, the embargoes had an effect on the wider population too. Six days previously (21st January), Radio Moscow reported that Reuters claimed the grain embargo would cost the US taxpayer almost \$3,000 million over two years.³³⁴ This was not a figure heard in broadcasts to North America.

Not only were the embargoes reported as backfiring and failing to hurt the Soviet Union, but there were also hints that the Soviet Union was not weak and could strike back – Radio Moscow may have been reporting events around a foreign aggression frame, but it also wanted to make clear the Soviet Union was more than capable of standing up to this. On 27th January, listeners heard the fears of a West German Chairman of Industry and Commerce, who claimed that the West, should it resort to sanctions, could face retaliatory measures by the USSR, particularly with oil and natural gas supplies.³³⁵

Another interesting argument that appeared within the broadcasts to Home audiences compared the ‘Carter Doctrine’ to the ‘Truman Doctrine’ in the late 1940s.³³⁶ Using an historical frame, the broadcaster was trying to conjure up negative associations with what Carter set out as a defence of US interests in the Persian Gulf – this was instead claimed to be part of a containment policy designed to encircle the Soviet Union. In an example of localisation of a frame, this argument was almost directly transferred over to broadcasts in Arabic, but with one crucial difference. Listeners around the Persian Gulf region were informed that the ‘Carter Doctrine’ was comparable not to the ‘Truman Doctrine’, but to the ‘Eisenhower Doctrine’ – ‘which the Arabs called the doctrine of aggression and neo-colonialism.’³³⁷ Instead of trying to get listeners to assume the US was trying to encircle the Soviet Union, Radio Moscow was using historical comparisons to purvey the idea to Arabic language or Home service listeners that the US was reasserting an attitude that allowed the use of force in the Middle East, or the encircling of the Soviet Union. Again, any perception of Soviet aggression in Afghanistan was sidestepped by focusing instead on one part of the US reaction and framing it as an example of US aggressive intentions.

³³³ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 25th January 1980, 1800, no.7

³³⁴ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 21st January 1980, 0130.

³³⁵ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 27th January 1980, 0800, ‘International Observers at the Round Table’, part 2, p.3

³³⁶ IWM/SU/B/522 RM Home 27th January 1980, 0800, part one, p.5

³³⁷ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 28th January 1980, 1700, 1.2

In another example of localisation, prior to placing the State of the Union address within this historical context the Arabic service first chose to focus solely on oil. A broadcast on 24th January suggested that President Carter's threat to 'use armed forces in the Arab Gulf area should...the American vital interests there be harmed...' was due to, '...the interests of the American oil companies which make astronomical profits from the oil of the Gulf countries and which naturally do not want to lose these profits.'³³⁸ There was certainly an element of exploitation within this statement. Accordingly, the statement continued with the argument that US oil firms had repeatedly encouraged the US to violently interfere within the Persian Gulf region – Radio Moscow told Arabic service listeners that Carter's address was yet another example of this.³³⁹ This was definitely trying to move thinking away from Afghanistan being the root cause of the recent statements. In a twist on the people harm and divisive frames, the people of the Persian Gulf region were being exploited by US big business, and Radio Moscow was trying to use this to build a divide between the US and the Arabic listeners.

Further analysis appeared on the Arabic service on 25th January, but as with many other Radio Moscow analyses of President Carter's words, specifics were lacking and it was not the speech itself that was examined, but the motives behind it and the reactions of states to it.³⁴⁰ In this instance reporting of Carter's policy once again used the frames of aggression and people harm, and frame localisation. It did this by trying to play on the existing regional tensions listeners would have been well aware of -

*'...Washington's desire to expand its military bases in Egypt and Israel and strike the national liberation movement of the Arab nations and in particular the Palestinian Arab people... the new Carter doctrine greatly strengthens the position of the Zionists and enables them to pursue a harder expansionist policy toward the Arab countries.'*³⁴¹

Jimmy Carter's claim to be defending the security of the Middle East, and the world supply of oil, was being explained to listeners as a ploy for American expansion in the region that would greatly benefit Israel, to the detriment of the Arab peoples. Afghanistan, the major influence on the speech, was only mentioned in this analysis as an event President Carter desired to exploit.³⁴² The Olympic boycott threat was not mentioned – it was evidently not perceived to be

³³⁸ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 24th January 1980, 1700, 1.2, p.1

³³⁹ Ibid

³⁴⁰ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 25th January 1980, 1700, p.1

³⁴¹ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 25th January 1980, 1700, 1.2, p.1

³⁴² IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 25th January 1980, 1700, p.1

of concern to Arabic audiences at this time – and the reaffirming of the trade embargoes was not mentioned either. What this particular broadcast did attempt though was to link criticism of the US to praise of the USSR, namely, ‘...the support of the Soviet Union for the Arab and national liberation movements and the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organisation]...’³⁴³ Furthermore -

*‘Irrespective of their [national liberation movement leaders] political views, they all have expressed grateful thanks to the Soviet Union for its consistent aid which is not influenced by external considerations in the struggle for political and economic independence.’*³⁴⁴

Again, Afghanistan was shown to be a pretext for US actions, yet the broadcasts in Arabic framed the State of the Union address by focusing on President Carter’s Persian Gulf plan, without directly referring to it. The broadcaster wanted listeners to understand that the address was really motivated by imperialism, capitalist oil companies trying to maximise profits, a desire to repress Arabic liberation, and aggression – ‘a blatant call for the armament race and confrontation with the Soviet Union and other members of the socialist community...’³⁴⁵ Even when trying to frame US actions as focused on the Persian Gulf, Radio Moscow made sure to emphasise that there was also aggression toward the Soviet Union – Arabic listeners had to fight the same cause as the Soviet people.

Afghanistan, only ever acknowledged as a pretext for pre-meditated US actions, was not the main concern for Soviet radio – presenting US imperialism and aggression was. This was the case not only within broadcasts to North America, the Soviet Union, and in Arabic, but also elsewhere. Radio Moscow broadcasts in German cited a *Pravda* article calling the address ‘a claim to world domination’, Finnish language listeners were informed that the USA would ‘continue the policy of force against détente...’, and listeners in Serbo-Croat were informed that ‘several US Congressmen criticised Carter’s State of the Union message’.³⁴⁶ Other regions, including Pashto, Polish and Turkish, all cited *Pravda* for their analyses of the address, but the BBC Monitoring Service material suggests that these reports were not widespread.³⁴⁷

In contrast, broadcasts to Britain & Ireland all but ignored the State of the Union address, preferring to focus almost exclusively on the British government and how it was trying to

³⁴³ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 25th January 1980, 1700, p.3

³⁴⁴ Ibid

³⁴⁵ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 25th January 1980, 1700, p.1

³⁴⁶ IWM/SU/E/174; RM German 28th January 1980, 2000, 1.1; RM Finn 22nd January 1980, 1630, 1.5; IWM/SU/E/175 RM Serb-Croat 24th January 1980, 2030, 1.5

³⁴⁷ IWM/SU/E/175 RM Polish 29th January 1980, 1700, 2.a; IWM/SU/F/: RM Pashto 29th January 1980, 1430, 1.1; RM Turkish 29th January 1980, 1400, 4.1.

exploit the world situation for its own gain. The Conservative government came to power in May 1979 with, Radio Moscow informed its audience,

*‘a clear-cut programme – to curtail Britain’s dialogue with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and to gain military supremacy for the West and secure positions of strength... Now the British Government apparently sees a good chance to use the events in Afghanistan for displaying its solidarity with Washington so as to obtain its own strategic objectives.’*³⁴⁸

This defined how British policy toward the Soviet Union, Afghanistan and the Olympics would be reported, and whilst the content may have been different, the frames were very similar to those used to report the situation via North American broadcasts.

An aggressive foreign policy was framed by Radio Moscow as a means for President Carter to hide domestic concerns, a frame that was also used to portray the British reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan. This was reported to be a pretext used by the British government as,

*‘anti-Sovietism has always been a reliable remedy to divert attention from domestic issues... [to] muffle down people’s discontent over her [Thatcher’s] own social and political fiascos...’*³⁴⁹

As with problems in Afghanistan being blamed on Amin, or US problems blamed on Carter, Radio Moscow personalised British domestic problems by placing the blame solely on Margaret Thatcher.

It was also reported that the Thatcher government was becoming ‘Washington’s political shadow...’, another reference to the imperialism frame, and that they were following the US with further military build-up, linking again to the frames of militarism and aggression.³⁵⁰ As in other regions, Afghanistan was reported as a ‘pretext’ to enhance British military build-up – similar to those in North America, British listeners were informed that their government wanted to increase its presence in the Persian Gulf.³⁵¹ However, more than anywhere else, in broadcasts to Britain & Ireland there appears to have been analysis of the proposal within the State of the Union address to boycott the Olympic Games. In part this could have been because of Thatcher’s remark in the House of Commons on 17th January that the government was in favour

³⁴⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 29th January 1980, 2000, 2, ‘Glance at the British Scene’, p.3

³⁴⁹ Ibid

³⁵⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 29th January 1980, 2000, 2, p.2

³⁵¹ Ibid

of the Olympics being moved from Moscow.³⁵² Radio Moscow reported this through the historical frame, presenting the view that a boycott had been long in the minds of policy makers. The tone of the broadcasting was very much summed up by the comments of one letter writer,

*'...that he had himself predicted many months ago that threats against the Soviet Union would include a halt to the moves towards détente, non-ratification of SALT-2 and a boycott of the Moscow Olympics.'*³⁵³

Radio Moscow presented its own opinion as to why the threat to boycott the Games was being discussed by the British government and press. Introducing 'Vantage Point', a regular commentary on topical issues, the commentator told listeners –

*'The pro-American Conservative press in Britain [are] screaming holy murder in a bid to disrupt the summer Olympic Games in Moscow...'*³⁵⁴

This statement made clear who Radio Moscow blamed for any threat to the Olympic Games – the 'pro-American Conservative press'. Using the misrepresentation frame, the same report accused the 'Tory controlled media' of having attempted several times to 'torpedo the Moscow Games', and that the 'Conservatives have launched a full-scale attack on the Moscow Games, and on the entire Olympic movement for good measure.'³⁵⁵ Nowhere in this attack on British foreign policy, and the British press, was Afghanistan mentioned.

Radio Moscow was attempting to make listeners believe that the Conservative government, and the press they supposedly controlled, were determined to destroy the whole Olympic movement, and with it the Moscow Games.³⁵⁶ Linking this to previous attempts, which had focused primarily on human rights and occasionally ideology since Moscow was awarded the Games in 1974, was also a way of deflecting attention from Afghanistan. Again, for those listeners who thought about Afghanistan in relation to the boycott, Radio Moscow was making the case that it was just another in a long line of excuses to boycott – again using the pretext and historical frames to try to influence listener thinking. The report went on to play down suggestions that the boycott would be successful, and that the reports, made by 'Tory spokesmen and newspapers', alluding to the financial burden a boycott could place on the Soviet Union, were wrong.³⁵⁷ The

³⁵² *Hansard*, House of Commons Debate, 17th January 1980, vol.976, cc.794-5W

³⁵³ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 24th January 1980, 2000, 5

³⁵⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 30th January 1980, 2000, 4, 'Vantage Point'

³⁵⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 30th January 1980, 2000, 4, 'Vantage Point', p.5

³⁵⁶ *Ibid*

³⁵⁷ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 30th January 1980, 2000, 4, 'Vantage Point', p.5

commentator told listeners very assuredly, ‘a boycott is of course out of the question.’³⁵⁸ Key to the reporting of this very clear anti-boycott message was the separation of Moscow and Afghanistan from the Olympic Games themselves. The reason for the boycott call, Afghanistan, did not appear at all. And whilst Moscow was acknowledged as the host of the Games, the argument was put forward in a manner that focused on how the ‘Olympic Games’, not the ‘Moscow Olympic Games’, would suffer from a boycott. As for the economic impact, the whole Olympic process had, according to this piece, merely moved forward pre-planned building works in Moscow, and therefore a boycott would not damage the Soviet economy by wasting costs on a sporting event with no sportsmen, because the structures would be built anyway.³⁵⁹ To drive home the point, the report finished by claiming,

*‘...the Olympic wreckers cannot possibly punish the Soviets financially, although they can wreck the Olympic movement.’*³⁶⁰

There were no outright statements from states such as Britain or the United States that non-attendance was because they wanted to punish the Soviet Union financially, the boycott threat was based solely, at this time, on the invasion of Afghanistan. The financial punishment of the Soviet Union was based around the trade embargoes, none of which Britain could really influence. By framing the boycott in economic terms, not only could Radio Moscow avoid linking it to Afghanistan, but they also shifted how it could be judged a success – not on athletic non-attendance, but on economic damage, which they dismissed as unachievable. Within broadcasts to Britain these were incorporated into the bigger, and undoubtedly more controversial, Olympic boycott story. What President Carter had said, and his motives for doing so, was transferred over to Margaret Thatcher and her government, with adaptations made to suit the British & Irish audience.

Just as Arab tensions with Israel were exploited when reporting the State of the Union address in Arabic language broadcasts to Persia, domestic discontent in Britain was being exploited as a means of explaining British foreign policy. American audiences were informed that Jimmy Carter wanted re-election, British audiences that the recently elected Mrs Thatcher needed to stifle domestic discontent over her policies. Radio Moscow reporting to Britain used the domestic issues frame in a manner that suggested world tensions were being heightened in an attempt to disguise the domestic woes of Margaret Thatcher and her ‘Tory’ government.

³⁵⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 30th January 1980, 2000, 4, ‘Vantage Point’, p.5

³⁵⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 30th January 1980, 2000, 4, ‘Vantage Point’, p.6

³⁶⁰ Ibid

Radio Moscow's English language World Service was also broadcasting claims that world tensions were being heightened without any basis. By 31st January 1980, it reported that '...most Afghans have the feeling of freedom and of calmly going about their business, and that the population supports the government's political line.'³⁶¹ Implicit within this statement was the opinion that news reporting to the contrary was wrong, and that Afghanistan was back to normal – this emerging 'normalisation' frame would appear regularly over the coming months. This report again contained a citation from a secondary source – the claim was made by delegates from the French General Confederation of Labour, a trade union group with strong communist views.³⁶² This claim, at the head of the news, was promptly followed by a report stating that 'On the pretext of the Afghan and Iranian issues the United States is openly counteracting international efforts to lessen the war menace.'³⁶³ Afghanistan was still a pretext, but this time it was linked to the on-going Iranian hostage crisis – another pretext the United States was apparently exploiting for its own ends.

The World Service also carried a report about concerns that the US would turn '...bases in Japan into strongholds for US troops deployed in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean areas'.³⁶⁴ There was also reportedly concern amongst the public in Asia that the 'heightening of the anti-Soviet campaign...' would cause a loss of economic opportunity and decreasing trade relations.³⁶⁵ The same report used the domestic issues frame to argue that 'the tough foreign policy course steered by the American administration and the boosting of military preparations are but an attempt to divert attention from America's own social and economic malaise.'³⁶⁶ The news cycle for that day (31st January) thus went like this:

1. Report from Afghanistan using the normalisation frame.
2. Describe US actions with regard to Afghanistan through the aggression frame.
3. Describe US actions as damaging world trade and thus harming the ordinary person.
4. Describe US actions as a desire to hide domestic problems using the domestic issues frame.

³⁶¹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st January 1980, 1500, 2.1, p.2

³⁶² General Confederation of Labour. 2013. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Retrieved 16 May, 2013, from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/228387/General-Confederation-of-Labour>

³⁶³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE Eng 31st January 1980, 1500, 2.2

³⁶⁴ Ibid

³⁶⁵ Ibid

³⁶⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE Eng 31st January 1980, 1500, 2.2

As each report came from the correspondent of a different region, the overall report helped frame the actions of the United States in a way that suggested they were damaging different groups around the world. The New York correspondent reported on dominant big business, reduced social care and military budget increases – all domestic concerns supposedly being covered up by foreign policy adventurism.³⁶⁷ The reporter from Jakarta talked of trade concerns amongst the public in Asia, and the reporter from Tokyo considered Japanese fears over US bases there.³⁶⁸ The actions of the United States were being reported through the aggression frame on a global scale.

The World Service also attempted to play down the trade embargo, which was something that other Radio Moscow broadcasts mostly failed to engage with. A bulletin on 31st January announced that the USSR maintained business contacts with 125 countries, and capitalist nations ‘account for about one-third of its foreign trade.’³⁶⁹ The report also claimed that,

*‘Following the European security conference the USSR signed some 30 agreements and programmes of economic co-operation with West European nations. These agreements have materialised, and are of importance to the West – particularly at a time of economic recession.’*³⁷⁰

Therefore, listeners could understand why the economic sanctions would fail to affect the Soviet Union whilst damaging the West – and it was not only the American farmer who would be hurt by trade sanctions.

World Service listeners also heard this general dismissal of the effect of the anti-Soviet measures applied to the US threat to withdraw from the Olympic Games. Within days of Carter officially threatening to boycott, Radio Moscow was almost gleefully reporting rejections of the idea from national Olympic committees worldwide. Reporting the failings of the boycott campaign through emphasis on the quantity frame, by 31st January, amongst those reported as rejecting the boycott call were: the Netherlands Olympic Committee; the Italian Olympic Committee; the chairman of the Belgian Olympic Committee; the Vice-President of the French National Olympic Committee; the majority of the French public; the Polish Olympic Committee (unsurprisingly); the heads of the Swedish and Danish Olympic Committees; the British

³⁶⁷ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st January 1980, 1500, 2.4

³⁶⁸ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st January 1980, 1500, 2.2 and 2.3

³⁶⁹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st January 1980, 1300, no.4, p.3

³⁷⁰ Ibid

Olympic Association; the Portuguese Olympic body; and the Iranian Olympic Committee.³⁷¹ Through listing national Olympic committees in this way, the boycott was being instantly portrayed as a failure.

Western sources were used to support the frames used to highlight boycott failure. With regard to the idea proposed by Margaret Thatcher of moving the Games, Radio Moscow cited the President of the West German Sports Union as claiming that ‘...switching the Games from Moscow would run counter to international rules.’³⁷² A US Senator was also reported as calling the boycott ‘...a hysterical action in the spirit of the cold war.’³⁷³ The vast majority of those reported as anti-boycott were also ‘Western’ states – those most likely to favour the United States, and therefore, by constantly implying that US allies were rejecting the boycott, Radio Moscow attempted to not only frame the campaign as an abject failure, but as one that was dividing the US from its traditional allies. The only supporters mentioned were the US Olympic Committee, ‘under the pressure of the Carter Administration...’ and General Pinochet’s regime in Chile.³⁷⁴

Mentions of states not attending were explained through emphasis upon other factors – Saudi Arabia was not attending because sport in that country was at a low level, ‘except perhaps for camel riding, which is not an Olympic sport so far’; and Fiji, which was rather small and according to Radio Moscow could not burden the financial cost of attendance.³⁷⁵ It was known before the invasion of Afghanistan that Saudi Arabia would not attend the Olympics for sporting reasons, but this did not stop it claiming in January 1980 to be boycotting because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.³⁷⁶ Fiji, however, has attended nearly all summer Olympics Games since joining the IOC in 1955, including the 1976 and 1984 Games – so when presented with evidence the Soviet argument about finances seems to collapse.³⁷⁷ Other states, such as Israel and Oman, were also mentioned as boycotting solely because of their military and

³⁷¹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE: 31st January 1980, 1100, 1.9; 28th January 1980, 1600, 1.8, and, 0700, 1.8; 27th January 1980, 0900, 1.8; 26th January 1980, 0400, 1.9; 25th January 1980, 2100; 24th January 1980, 1100, 1.7; 24th January 1980, 1300, 1.6; 23rd January 1980, 0900, 1.5

³⁷² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st January 1980, 1100, 1.9

³⁷³ Ibid

³⁷⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE: 29th January 1980, 0900, 2.4; and 28th January 1980, 0900, 2.5

³⁷⁵ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 28th January 1980, 0900, 2.5

³⁷⁶ Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan and the 1980 U.S. Boycott*. p.67

³⁷⁷ See the Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee (FASANOC) website for more details on Fiji’s Olympians, the Games and sports they have participated in, and also for the foundation years of the National Olympic Committee (1949) and its acceptance into the International Olympic Committee (1955). http://www.foxsportspulse.com/assoc_page.cgi?client=1-3653-0-0-0&sID=36674&&news_task=DETAIL&articleID=1042931

economic dependence on the United States, or, as in the cases of states such as Britain, were governments within Washington's military bloc.³⁷⁸

In admonishing President Carter, perhaps the finest critique and use of word-play came when Radio Moscow told World Service listeners -

*'...the US President is too busy with such political sports as wrestling with other Presidential candidates, lifting the military budget and outscoring his opponents in short-sightedness.'*³⁷⁹

Within this sentence are the outlines of frames that appeared elsewhere in Soviet broadcasts attacking the United States administration – the domestic issue frame, the aggression frame, the imperialism frame, and, with regard to 'short-sightedness', the harm frame – in this instance referring to international politics and economics. Interestingly, there was no direct link on the World Service broadcasts between events in Afghanistan and the Olympic Games boycott – Afghanistan was merely reported as a pretext used by Washington to aggravate the world situation as a whole.³⁸⁰ One commentary used it as part of analysis of the State of the Union address – an analysis that focused on the military industrial complex in America and the need of the US Administration to increase the military budget to \$168.8 billion.³⁸¹ Afghanistan was exploited by the US Administration because '...the American military industrial complex has a vital stake in worsening the international climate.'³⁸² Afghanistan was a pretext being used to distract from spreading US aggression. It was not just the US being framed as aggressive either. The World Service also reported that Britain was using the situation to 'sharply increase the British military presence in the Persian Gulf area...to give large-scale aid to Pakistan... [and] to stimulate the development of relations with China, especially military relations.'³⁸³

That Afghanistan was just a pretext for these policies was further encouraged by commentary on Carter's State of the Union address, with analyst Viktor Shragin claiming 'The American President formulated his doctrine as early as December 12th last year [1979], that is prior to the events in Afghanistan.'³⁸⁴ Interestingly, and presumably as coincidence, 12th December 1979 is

³⁷⁸ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th January 1980, 0900, 2.4

³⁷⁹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 28th January 1980, 0900, 2.5

³⁸⁰ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th January 1980, 2100, 2.3

³⁸¹ Ibid

³⁸² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th January 1980, 2100, 2.3, p.3

³⁸³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th January 1980, 0900, 1.5

³⁸⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th January 1980, 1300, 2.2

also the reported date of the Politburo meeting that agreed to the invasion of Afghanistan.³⁸⁵ However, it is clear from this that an attempt was made to get listeners to think the State of the Union address, and all the measures contained within it, were not reactions to Afghanistan, but continuations of a long-running anti-Soviet policy – the reports were using a historical frame.

Claiming premeditation was not a new way of reporting the situation, but this was the only time over the airwaves that a specific date for the anti-Soviet measures was announced. There may also be an element of truth in the accusation as well – although whether the reporters knew this at the time is unknown. Meetings were indeed held by senior members of the US Administration as far back as September 1979 to discuss measures to be taken should the Soviet Union invade Afghanistan.³⁸⁶ It would be no surprise if plans, or a doctrine of sorts, were indeed agreed on 12th December, although it would seem that Radio Moscow still took this out of the context of being in reaction to Soviet actions. However, it fitted the frame of US aggression and exploitation of Afghanistan far better out of context.

Broadcasts in English to Africa also chose to focus on the ideas of aggression and imperialism – the latter occasionally being localised in the form of colonialism. Radio Moscow informed African listeners that whilst Jimmy Carter praised American attempts to promote racial equality in South Africa, American investments actually helped ‘consolidate the racist regime’.³⁸⁷ Furthermore, American actions over the entire continent ‘...amounted to encouragement of racists and their aggressive attacks on the frontline countries.’³⁸⁸ Rather than being an analysis of the State of the Union address, this commentary turned into a critique of United States actions in Africa. This was typical of the way events in January were broadcast to African audiences. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was reported as friendly assistance, against a backdrop of American imperialist expansion.³⁸⁹ Citing the Madagascan news agency, TARATRA, Radio Moscow informed African listeners,

‘...the United States has 80 Air Force bases alone, around the world, not counting those in areas where ground forces are stationed. This network with nuclear weapons and

³⁸⁵ Hughes, “The Soviet-Afghan War, 1978-1989: An Overview.” p.332

³⁸⁶ Z. Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (Farrar Straus & Giroux (T), 1983). p.427

³⁸⁷ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 26th January 1980, 1700, 2.1

³⁸⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 26th January 1980, 1700, 2.1, p.3

³⁸⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 26th January 1980, 1700, 2.2, p.4

*delivery vehicles belongs not to the USSR but to the United States, which thus threatens world peace.*³⁹⁰

This was also the argument used to report to listeners of the French language African channel – who heard that the address supported ‘politics from a position of force and of increased military budget.’³⁹¹ The African service used the aggression frame to report the statements from the US President, at the same time hearing about Soviet actions aimed at helping peace – they were told the Soviet Union helped to prevent US subversion in Afghanistan, the same subversive action that ‘...was the case in Zaire recently’.³⁹² This is a very good example of Radio Moscow using a localisation frame for reporting the news – in this instance linking international events to local history in a drive to win over any sceptical listeners to the Soviet side.

Even the Olympic boycott was described as an example of the ‘...hypocritical stand of this country [USA] towards cooperation and détente.’³⁹³ The boycotting of a sporting event was being portrayed as an aggressive act. Mentioned on the World Service but examined in more detail in English to Africa, the Carter Administration’s faux pas in asking South Africa to support the boycott was pounced upon by Radio Moscow, who used it as an opportunity to examine South Africa’s sporting failings.³⁹⁴ More directly, Radio Moscow quoted the version of events described by Ethiopian newspaper ‘*Addis Zemen*’ -

*‘...the US and its allies want to turn the Olympic movement into a vehicle of imperialism, under the pretext of the events in Afghanistan.’*³⁹⁵

Again, Afghanistan was a pretext, but there was a new twist on an existing frame here – the Olympic Games were being used for US imperialism. In broadcasts targeting other audiences, the Games and boycott considerations had been portrayed around the domestic issue frame. Of course, the credentials of the citation must be pointed out– *Addis Zemen* was the official newspaper of the Worker’s Party of Ethiopia, a communist party. The French language African service reported similar opinion, quoting a *Pravda* article that claimed ‘...the USA want to

³⁹⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 26th January 1980, 1700, 2.2, p.4

³⁹¹ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 22nd January 1980, 1700, 1.3

³⁹² IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 22nd January 1980, 1700, 2.1; Zaire was heavily influenced by the US in the mid-1970s, with some of its provinces becoming engaged in a war fought predominantly in neighbouring Angola between Cuban backed fighters and US/South African backed fighters.

³⁹³ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 31st January 1980, 1700, 3

³⁹⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 29th January 1980, 1700, 5; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th January 1980, 0900, 2.4, p.3

³⁹⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 26th January 1980, 1700, 1.14

secure world domination for themselves, helped in their bellicose designs by some NATO countries and China.³⁹⁶ Whilst the threat to the Olympic Games made the airwaves, the overlying emphasis was still on the US aggressive imperialist aims.

The same frame was used to report the State of the Union address via the English language Asian service. The immediate report to listeners told them ‘Carter reaffirmed US intentions to step up military preparations...’.³⁹⁷ In a more comprehensive report, listeners heard –

*‘Carter in his State of the Union message referred to the vital interests of the US in areas thousands of miles from the United States. Many Asian countries cannot but be alarmed... Humanite for one believes that the current strategic plans of his Administration are aimed at frustrating the easing of international tension.’*³⁹⁸

There was no mention of how it all related to Afghanistan, the focus was once more upon the Persian Gulf part of the address and the frame was US aggression. In *l’Humanite*, once more a non-Soviet, but pro-communist, source was used to support the argument.

Asian English language listeners heard the State of the Union address reported separately to Afghanistan and the Olympic Games. There was no change in the frames used to report the events in Afghanistan, despite the news bulletins targeting listeners in the vicinity of the conflict, and there were reports about ‘Afghan forces wiping out several terrorist bands armed with American and Chinese weapons’.³⁹⁹ Problems in Afghanistan were blamed on US involvement. However, Radio Moscow targeted this audience by emphasising the relationship they perceived between imperialism and Pakistan. Listeners heard an *Izvestiya* report claim,

*‘after [the] imperialist[s] had lost [their] stronghold in Iran and their hopes of undermining revolutionary process in Afghanistan were shattered, they decided to use Pakistan as an instrument of their policy towards neighbouring countries, especially Afghanistan.’*⁴⁰⁰

Babrak Karmal called Pakistan ‘a stepping stone for armed provocations against Afghanistan’, and Gandhi was quoted as expressing concern over US arms to Pakistan.⁴⁰¹ There was no

³⁹⁶ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 29th January 1980, 1700, 2

³⁹⁷ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 24th January 1980, 1400, 1.4

³⁹⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 26th January 1980, 1400, 2.2

³⁹⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 26th January 1980, 1400, 1.4

⁴⁰⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 27th January 1980, 1400, 1.5

⁴⁰¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 29th January 1980, 1400, 1.3 and 1.5

mention of Soviet acts in Afghanistan, US-Pakistan relations were key – this was, listeners heard, the reason behind upheaval in the region.

For listeners to the English language Asian service, coverage of the Olympic boycott suggestion also neglected to mention its links with Afghanistan. The coverage was very brief, suggesting the frame used was one of omission, and the reporting did not focus on the call to boycott, but instead the reaction of foreign officials. Hence, Lord Killanin, the IOC President, was quoted rejecting the Games being moved, a Director of the IOC was reported as suggesting a boycott of the Moscow Olympics would lead to reconsideration of holding the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, and France was reported as rejecting the boycott call.⁴⁰² There were no commentaries dealing directly with the reasons for it or how it would fail – foreign sources were used to help frame the boycott as a failure. As with reports to Africa, President Carter may have made a speech denouncing Soviet actions in Afghanistan, offering to defend the Persian Gulf from outside aggression, and threatening to use international sport as part of a reprisals package against the Kremlin, but Radio Moscow was taking his words and using them to further impress their own views of the United States upon the world.

5.3 SUMMARY

Even though President Carter's address firmly blamed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan for the subsequent reactions and heightening of international tension, Radio Moscow continued to try and disassociate the two. As the US and other states announced their responses to Afghanistan, Radio Moscow searched for reasons to explain these, reasons far removed from the Soviet invasion. In particular, the pretext and analytical frames were used, explaining away the reaction as both an excuse for pre-planned actions and a distraction from domestic woes. The personification frame also advanced at this time, with far less reporting of Afghan President's Amin and Karmal, and far more concentrated focus on, primarily, President Carter and his personal motivations. It is clear that Radio Moscow had definitively moved away from the initial defensive reporting of the Soviet invasion, supplying justifications for their actions, and was now concentrating on attacking the reactions of certain states, and unsurprisingly President Carter and the United States bore the brunt of this attack.

The three significant events discussed here emphasise some key traits of Radio Moscow. Firstly, the reporting of the United Nations resolution, or rather lack of it, and the contrast with the

⁴⁰² IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 22nd January 1980, 1400, 1.9, 23rd January 1980, 1400, 1.11, 24th January 1980, 1400, 1.8

attacks on the Islamic Conference, show how Soviet broadcasting, and therefore the Soviet hierarchy, viewed the relative strength and significance of each body. The lack of UN reporting suggests the broadcaster feared the strength of the body, whereas the Islamic Conference was viewed as weak, and a body that Radio Moscow wanted perceived as just a stooge of US imperialism. Secondly, the reporting of the State of the Union address shows the adaptability of Radio Moscow. President Carter was extremely critical of the Soviet actions in Afghanistan, and his speech concentrated on this. However, if one only heard the reporting of Radio Moscow the speech would be perceived as the US aggressively announcing global expansion.

The State of the Union address concentrated on condemning Soviet actions in Afghanistan and informing the world of the US response. The imperialism frame was particularly useful as a way to both suggest that foreign criticism of Soviet actions was being controlled from Washington, and that Washington was using the Soviet intervention as a smokescreen to further US goals around the world. There was particular emphasis on this in Arabic language broadcasts, due to Radio Moscow's interpretation of the 'Carter Doctrine' as being aggressive, rather than defensive. Yet depending on which broadcast a listener heard, the speech was reported very differently. The localisation approach meant that listeners to the Arabic service heard reporting concentrating on President Carter's expansionist aims into the Persian Gulf, listeners to the North American service heard the speech was part of domestic election strategy, and listeners to the Home service heard it was further US aggression, using Afghanistan as a pretext for pre-planned actions. The World Service reported the speech in terms of aggression, and even accused the US of involving itself in Afghanistan because it had lost its Iranian foothold in the region. There was no one reporting frame, the speech supplied enough material for Radio Moscow to pick and choose, localising its reporting to better suit the audience.

What can clearly be seen throughout the broadcasting at this time therefore is that the speech attacking Soviet actions in Afghanistan actually supplied Radio Moscow with enough material to instead try to concentrate its listeners on US domestic and foreign policy. Rather than report the words of the speech, Radio Moscow preferred to report analysis of the speech, explaining why the US was acting in this way, and carefully explaining away any insinuations that it was the fault of the Soviet Union, instead using factors such as electioneering or inherent US imperialism to explain the situation.

Alongside these more established frames, three new ways of reporting events appeared at this time. These were the religious, analytical, and normalisation frames. The religious frame was primarily concentrated on reporting to the Middle East and Asia, and seems to have been used to try and emphasise the religious accessibility in the Soviet Union and Afghanistan – another

frame designed to push listeners away from the idea that there may be some sort of religious war taking place in Afghanistan. The normalisation frame began to appear here as a means of reporting life in Afghanistan as improving – there was greater security and people were beginning to go about business as usual. This frame helped reinforce the assistance frame previously used, to support Soviet claims that they were acting legitimately, and to show that the US-backed insurgents were losing. The final new frame was the analytical frame – which concentrated on the reasons behind the anti-Soviet backlash. Not only did this frame try to move the reasons for this backlash away from the invasion of Afghanistan, but it also moved discussion away from directly quoting the words of President Carter, Margaret Thatcher or others, and instead focused attention on their motivations. Analysis of, rather than mere quoting of, the statements and events was the way Radio Moscow proceeded in covering the State of the Union address, the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers resolution, and the growing Olympic boycott campaign. But rather than defend Soviet actions in Afghanistan, Radio Moscow was more concerned with attacking the motives of those that had condemned those actions.

CHAPTER 6

MUHAMMAD ALI, CYRUS VANCE, THE BOYCOTT CAMPAIGN AND KABUL

Between the 5th and 28th February, there were significant developments for both the Olympic boycott campaign and for how Radio Moscow could frame events in Afghanistan. This is a longer time frame than the previous chapters because it covers three important but overlapping events related to Afghanistan and the Olympic boycott campaign. Firstly, as part of US attempts to gain support for the reaction to Afghanistan, especially the boycott, members of the US Administration visited states worldwide. Among these was the boxer Muhammad Ali, who had a high-profile tour of Africa between 3rd and 11th February. Days later, the US Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, made a controversial speech at the Lake Placid Winter Olympics, calling for a boycott of Moscow in no uncertain terms. Secondly, during the Lake Placid Games the deadline set by President Carter, 19th February 1980, after which the US team would boycott the Moscow Games unless there was a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, passed. Finally, on 22nd February, there was a major uprising in the Afghan capital, Kabul, one that Radio Moscow could not ignore.

This chapter begins by analysing the frames used to report the tour of Africa by Muhammad Ali and the Lake Placid speech of Cyrus Vance, before moving on to examine how Radio Moscow compared what was happening in Lake Placid with what the Soviet broadcaster claimed would happen at the Moscow Games. Whilst previous chapters have examined the frames Radio Moscow used when reporting the speeches of President Carter, this chapter considers what frames were used when reporting the actions of prominent figures acting on his behalf. Additionally, Lake Placid provided an opportunity for Radio Moscow to emphasise the merits of sport as a way to bring people together outside the political realm, at a time when the US President was threatening to use the Olympics to make a political point. The final section, examining the reporting of the Afghan uprising, considers how Radio Moscow managed to frame the event in such a way as to fit existing frames such as imperialism, misrepresentation, and normalisation. Previous reporting of Afghanistan had concentrated on explaining to listeners around the world the reasons for the turmoil that had existed before the Soviet Union had sent help to the new regime, this uprising was the first time Radio Moscow had to engage with turmoil after the invasion.

6.1 RADIO MOSCOW, MUHAMMAD ALI AND CYRUS VANCE

Muhammad Ali had been a firm supporter of the boycott campaign from the outset. Even before President Carter's boycott threat, he announced that members of his gym would not be going to the Soviet Union for the Olympics.⁴⁰³ Coupled with his background as a black-American Muslim who refused to enlist for Vietnam, and his global profile as 'the greatest' heavyweight world champion, it was hardly surprising that he was asked to campaign on behalf of President Carter in Africa. His tour was not viewed as a success though. The first bruising encounters were described by *The Washington Post* thus -

'Muhammad Ali brought President Carter's Olympic boycott campaign to Africa... and immediately ran into a barrage of verbal and diplomatic left hooks that left him wondering about the wisdom of his mission'.⁴⁰⁴

Writing about the trip in 1993, Wenn & Wenn claimed,

'Ali's selection was assailed by the US media as a foreign relations faux pas by the lukewarm reception he received in Africa... and Ali's own statements which indicated a lack of preparation'.⁴⁰⁵

Despite these views, the trip initially worried the Soviet Union enough for the Soviet Ambassador in India, where Ali was staying immediately before he flew to Africa, to argue the Soviet case all night and tire the boxer enough to make the first meetings in Africa a struggle.⁴⁰⁶ There were protests in Africa during his visit, some undoubtedly started by Soviet activists.⁴⁰⁷ This allowed Radio Moscow's Home service to refer to an AFP [Agence France-Presse] report 'on a student demonstration outside the US Embassy in protest against Mohammad Ali's visit'.⁴⁰⁸ The Nigerian President refused to meet Muhammad Ali, complaining that Africa had been sent a mere boxer whilst other regions had senior members of the Carter Administration,

⁴⁰³ S. Wenn and J. Wenn, "Muhammad Ali and the Convergence of Olympic Sport and U.S. Diplomacy in 1980: A Reassessment from Behind the Scenes at the U.S. State Department," *OLYMPIKA: The International Journal of Olympic Studies* 2 (1993): 45-66. p.45

⁴⁰⁴ *The Washington Post*, 4th February 1980, p.A1

⁴⁰⁵ Wenn and Wenn, "Muhammad Ali and the Convergence of Olympic Sport and U.S. Diplomacy in 1980: A Reassessment from Behind the Scenes at the U.S. State Department." p.46

⁴⁰⁶ Wenn and Wenn, "Muhammad Ali and the Convergence of Olympic Sport and U.S. Diplomacy in 1980: A Reassessment from Behind the Scenes at the U.S. State Department." p.50

⁴⁰⁷ One example mentioned by Wenn & Wenn involved Ali being accosted in his hotel room and lectured on Marxism - Wenn and Wenn, "Muhammad Ali and the Convergence of Olympic Sport and U.S. Diplomacy in 1980: A Reassessment from Behind the Scenes at the U.S. State Department." p.51

⁴⁰⁸ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 7th February 1980, 1330, 'International Diary', no.7

for example Cyrus Vance went to Europe and Secretary of Defence Harold Brown to China.⁴⁰⁹ This was reported by Radio Moscow, again citing a third-party source (this time *Reuters*), and Home service listeners also heard that the famous American commentator Walter Cronkite had commented ‘...on the folly of the mission...’.⁴¹⁰ An emphasis on the protests and refusals to meet Ali allowed Radio Moscow to frame the tour as a failure, as an example of a divide between the US and Africa.

By 7th February, the Home service told listeners the tour had,

*‘...already become a scandal... the sportsman’s insufficient expertise in political affairs, the Washington administration entrusted him with persuading African states to disrupt the Olympic Games in Moscow. In Nigeria... neither the members of the National Olympic Committee nor the head of states with whom Ali requested for an audience wished to meet him. To top it all Radio Lagos recommended the latter-day American diplomat to lose no time in renouncing the mission entrusted to him in order to save the blushes of himself and the US administration.’*⁴¹¹

The important phrase in this statement was ‘disrupt the Olympic Games’ – there was no mention of Afghanistan, the trip was portrayed as an American attempt to damage the Moscow Games, not an attempt to show disgust about Soviet actions in Afghanistan. It is an example of Radio Moscow trying to shift the reasons behind world events. Reinforcing the divisive frame, there were no mentions of any successful meetings, only an emphasis on those who refused to meet Ali.

The refusal by the President of Tanzania to meet Ali added to the sense of failure, with Radio Moscow reporting on 8th February that,

*‘The boxer came in for especial criticism in the local press [Nigerian press] for allowing himself, as a Muslim, to be used by President Carter for political ends. Ali’s assertions repeating Carter’s remarks alleging the world is on the brink of world war because of the events in Afghanistan were laughed at by Africans. Tanzania’s President...said it was utter nonsense.’*⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁹ Wenn and Wenn, “Muhammad Ali and the Convergence of Olympic Sport and U.S. Diplomacy in 1980: A Reassessment from Behind the Scenes at the U.S. State Department.” p.55-57

⁴¹⁰ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 7th February 1980, 1806, ‘International Diary’, no.5

⁴¹¹ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 7th February 1980, 2300, ‘International Diary’, no.7

⁴¹² IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 8th February 1980, 1900, ‘no.3

This partially removed the blame from Muhammad Ali – he was being used by Jimmy Carter for the President’s own aims. This is a similar frame to that of imperialism, in that Radio Moscow was emphasising that it was the US President influencing the actions of others – instead of it being other countries or whole regional groups, such as the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, this time Carter was exploiting a specific person. Continuing the theme that the US was exaggerating the events in Afghanistan, and to show Home listeners that foreign groups disagreed with the US President, Africans were said to find Carter’s views laughable. Of most interest here though is the phrase, ‘...himself, as a Muslim...’. The implication given was that Muslims were, or should have been, against the boycott and against the US view on Afghanistan. Radio Moscow may have been determined to avoid religious connotations with regard to the war in Afghanistan, but, as with the accusations about the Islamic Conference, they were not afraid to insinuate that the United States was trying to exploit religion for its own ends – in this instance specifically sending a Muslim to Africa to build support for the boycott.

Despite the high profile nature of the trip, Radio Moscow did not cover it to the same degree in broadcasts to other audiences. There were some brief reports via the World Service, commenting on Ali’s failures in Nigeria and Tanzania, and the Africa service claimed Ali ‘doesn’t seem to have understood his new role of political ambassador and had expected that his tour of Africa could cause any other reaction than but that of an approval.’⁴¹³ French broadcasts to Africa also carried a disapproving line – ‘...the trip of Mohammad Ali in the African countries goes ahead, always for dishonest aims’, and ‘benefited neither him nor those who sent him’⁴¹⁴. However, despite brief comment in broadcasts to France describing Ali’s cool reception in Nigeria, and a commentary by TASS reproduced for audiences listening in Serbo-Croat, which focused on a US expedition to Africa with a ‘former world boxing champion’, not naming Ali, Radio Moscow was largely quiet on a tour that was also criticised within the US.⁴¹⁵

Within the Soviet Union itself, reports also used an exploitation frame to suggest that both Ali and his religion were being exploited by the US President for political gains. Radio Moscow also claimed the lack of success he enjoyed on tour was indicative of an African dislike of the boycott idea. It was as if Ali’s tour was set up to be a public relations coup for the Soviet Union – an almost ready-made opportunity to show the boycott campaign was failing. Yet it was an

⁴¹³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 5th February 1980, 0400, 1.8; and 7th February 1980, 1300, 1.9; IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 7th February 1980, 1700, 6

⁴¹⁴ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 5th February 1980, 1725; 12th February 1980, 1700, 3.7

⁴¹⁵ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 8th February 1980, 1930; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Serbo-Croat 9th February 1980, 2030, 4

opportunity Radio Moscow chose not to capitalise on. Although the supposed failings of the tour appeared to hand Radio Moscow some great anti-boycott publicity, the lack of use suggests that, perhaps like the United Nations, the broadcaster found it difficult to criticise Muhammad Ali. They did not want to publicise his tour and perhaps make listeners wonder why such a world-famous sporting icon, Muslim, anti-war protestor, and of course Olympic champion, was promoting the boycott of an Olympic Games.

Moving away from the specific failings of Ali's tour, Home service listeners heard on 8th February -

'It seems that Muhammad Ali's fiasco has forced Washington to adopt other measures. UP, relying on government circles, reports that the US President Carter has decided to send the Secretary of State, Vance, to Lake Placid... not in the capacity of a lover of sporting spectacles. The aim of the visit is to persuade members of the International Olympic Committee to boycott...' ⁴¹⁶

This statement all but ended Radio Moscow's coverage of Ali's trip – the final review came on 11th February, with the Home service *International Diary* program reporting that,

'He admits that his trip was 'not a complete success': many African countries refused to boycott the Olympics... His trip has shown that the independent African countries do not wish to follow blindly the anti-Soviet campaign that is being whipped up by Washington... it is better to be at home than to fly thousands of miles to take part in a disreputable mission even for the President himself.' ⁴¹⁷

Within this statement there is a clear allusion to the idea that those who had joined the boycott were not 'independent' – they were countries that relied on the United States. This links back to the initial frame Radio Moscow used to report on the states that joined the boycott campaign, that they were reliant on the United States – the imperialism frame. Ali's trip was also reported through the frame of exploitation, by either President Carter or the US Administration. It seems that when they did report on the trip, Radio Moscow tried to shift the blame for Ali's words away from the boxer himself and onto the US leadership – thus continuing the theme that all the anti-Soviet actions and statements in recent weeks were in some way directed by the White House.

⁴¹⁶ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 8th February 1980, 2300, no.10

⁴¹⁷ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 11th February 1980, 1330, 'International Diary', no.4

Before Cyrus Vance made his speech, Radio Moscow tried to portray his appearance as a direct consequence of Ali's failure in Africa.⁴¹⁸ This was not a widely reported argument, it appears it was only heard by Soviet listeners, and it missed the point that no African teams took part in the winter Olympics – Vance was lobbying a different audience. However, reporting this way suggested a grasping at events by the US, rather than a concerted and planned approach.

So Cyrus Vance arrived in Lake Placid and used the opportunity to attack the Soviet Union over Afghanistan and demand the Moscow Games be moved or boycotted.⁴¹⁹ He failed to gain any applause from his audience – unsurprisingly considering they made up the International Olympic Committee delegation and various other dignitaries related to the world of sport.⁴²⁰ Vance spoke of the 'honour to welcome this distinguished Committee to the United States and to Lake Placid, and to welcome athletes from around the world to the 1980 Winter Olympics.'⁴²¹ However, rather than praise the upcoming Games, he focused on Afghanistan. He claimed '...the Olympics have symbolised some of humanity's noblest principles. Foremost among these is peace.'⁴²² Vance's point was simple –

*'In the view of my government, it would be a violation of this fundamental Olympic principle to conduct or attend Olympic Games in a nation which is currently engaging in an aggressive war, and has refused to comply with the world community's demand to halt its aggression and withdraw its forces.'*⁴²³

He went on to justify why the Soviet team was allowed, in the view of the US Administration, to attend the Winter Games –

*'This is not a question of whether a national team should be barred from competing on political grounds. We welcome every team this Committee has invited... The question... is whether the Games should be held in a country which is itself committing a serious breach of international peace. It is our conviction that to do so would be wholly inconsistent with the meaning of the Olympics... To hold the Olympics in any nation that is warring on another is to lend the Olympic mantle to that nation's actions.'*⁴²⁴

⁴¹⁸ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 8th February 1980, 2300, 'International Diary', no.10

⁴¹⁹ Vance, "Remarks by Mr Cyrus Vance, Lake Placid, February 1980."

⁴²⁰ Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, The Olympic Boycott and the Cold War*.

⁴²¹ Vance, "Remarks by Mr Cyrus Vance, Lake Placid, February 1980." p.124

⁴²² Ibid

⁴²³ Ibid

⁴²⁴ Ibid

Vance was clearly not going to get a standing ovation, and Radio Moscow made sure listeners around the world knew that this was the case. The broadcaster did not hide why Cyrus Vance was in Lake Placid – ‘to campaign for a boycott of the Moscow Olympics’, and to repeat ‘the request of the American government for a change in the venue or a cancelation of the Olympics’.⁴²⁵ However, on behalf of the International Olympic Committee Lord Killanin was cited by Radio Moscow as saying that it ‘is inadmissible for sport to be used for political aims’.⁴²⁶ Killanin’s quote helped Radio Moscow frame the boycott campaign, and the United States, as being wrong – without having to mention Afghanistan.

As with Radio Moscow coverage of President Carter’s addresses in January, the specifics of Vance’s speech were bypassed, instead the analytical frame was applied and listeners heard about the reasons for the speech and the reaction. Citing an AFP story, on 10th February Home service listeners heard the speech was,

*‘...met with the indignation of the majority of this [the IOC] Committee. As the French NOC representative... stated, Vance went beyond all limits, carrying on the election campaign of President Carter...’*⁴²⁷

Not only was Vance’s speech framed as a disaster based on the reaction of the committee, but the whole reasoning for his speech was based on the domestic issue frame, in particular the US election campaign, and not anger over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Later the same day, listeners were told it was –

*‘...a speech which, according to the opinion shared by those assembled, was unprecedented in the history of IOC sessions. (?The speech abounded in terminology) borrowed from the Cold War arsenal. The State Secretary, on behalf of the US President, again voiced provocative demands to transfer or boycott the Olympic Games in Moscow.’*⁴²⁸

Vance’s speech was provocative, it was demanding, but it was dismissed by the Soviet broadcaster as merely Cold War rhetoric that was met with amazement by leaders of the

⁴²⁵ Quotes from: IWM/SU/B/523 RM Home: 9th February 1980, 0100, 3.17, and, 10th February 1980, 0310, ‘International Diary’, no.12. For other examples see: IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 9th February 1980, 2300, 1.9; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 9th February 1980, 1500, 1.7; IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 10th February 1980, 2000, 1.7

⁴²⁶ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 10th February 1980, 1200, no.10

⁴²⁷ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 10th February 1980, 1600, no.14

⁴²⁸ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 10th February 1980, 2340, no.2 [The question mark at the start of the brackets is due to the received broadcast being unclear, and the monitor estimating the wording]

Olympic institution.⁴²⁹ All these points were used to reinforce that the boycott was a failure. What is more, as with President Carter's State of the Union address, despite the speech focusing on Afghanistan, Radio Moscow did not report the link to Afghanistan once.

Apart from broadcasts to Home service listeners, these were the only transcripts of broadcasts covering Vance's speech found in the BBC Monitoring archive. However, the words of Lord Killanin, the IOC President, which were directly related to Vance's speech, did gain coverage throughout the Radio Moscow world. The broadcaster reported that he had said 'sport must not be used for political purposes'.⁴³⁰ Yet what Killanin actually said was slightly different -

*'Solutions to the political problems of the world are not the responsibility of sporting bodies... do not use athletes for the solution of political problems.'*⁴³¹

Using sport for political purposes is different to using it to solve political problems. The word 'purpose' suited the portrayal of the boycott as a part of a wider US scheming. Afghanistan was the political 'problem' Killanin alluded to, but by slightly adjusting the word used by the IOC President, Radio Moscow could more easily fit the statement into its various frames reporting the boycott campaign – such as trying to link it to imperialist ambitions or domestic issues. As with the reporting of Muhammad Ali's tour, coverage of Cyrus Vance's speech, or rather the reaction to it, appears to have been confined to the Home service. It seems Radio Moscow was determined to frame the actions of both men as failures through emphasis on the outrage and lack of support from those they addressed. Radio Moscow also avoided acknowledging that the invasion of Afghanistan was the real reason behind both visits.

6.2 OLYMPIC GAMES: LAKE PLACID VERSUS MOSCOW

Alongside reporting the Lake Placid results, Radio Moscow also took the opportunity to compare and, in particular, contrast the facilities available in New York State with those soon to be available in Moscow. This appears to have started the moment comments on Cyrus Vance had finished – Vance's speech effectively paved the way for criticism of the rest of the Games. On 11th/12th February, this began with complaints over the treatment of Soviet athletes on their

⁴²⁹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 11th February 1980, 1300, 1.7; IWM/SU/C/216 RM Asia 11th February 1980, 1400, 1.12

⁴³⁰ Some examples: IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 10th February 1980, 2340, 'Sports Diary' no.1; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 10th February 1980, 2100, 1.7; IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 10th February 1980, 2300, 1.10; RM GBI 10th February 1980, 2000, 1.7; IWM/SU/E/174 RM German 10th February 1980, 2000, 1.7; IWM/SU/D/212 RM Swede 10th February 1980, 1900, 1.5

⁴³¹ Vance, "Remarks by Mr Cyrus Vance, Lake Placid, February 1980."

way to Lake Placid, and continued with criticism of the facilities.⁴³² The Olympic village was the main cause of concern – and it was not only Radio Moscow that was critical. *Sports Illustrated*, the US sports magazine, was also not pleased with the village. It was newly built and had, according to the promotion material, a ‘...primary goal... to insure a happy, memorable visit for these world class athletes, to create a home away from home.’⁴³³ The problem was that the funding for the village had come from the US Federal Bureau of Prisons, and the whole village was to become a prison after the Games.⁴³⁴ It seems it was a prison adapted for a sporting event, rather than a sports facility ready to be adapted to a prison. *Sports Illustrated* reported that ‘...around this jail a revolt, unprecedented in Olympic history, has broken out... a growing number of teams refuse to be incarcerated there’.⁴³⁵ Olympic teams have to pay for the use of the Olympic village, whether or not they actually use it, and this rule, combined with complaints about the facilities, led to a Director of the IOC announcing that, ‘This time the accommodations are so poor that delegations will not have to pay for them if they move somewhere else.’⁴³⁶ This was yet more material from Lake Placid that Radio Moscow could use to highlight the differences between the Winter Games and the upcoming Summer Games, or, at a more political level, to highlight the superiority of forthcoming Soviet facilities over those of its Cold War rival, the USA.

Radio Moscow got down into the detail about this, telling Home service listeners -

‘...the Olympic participants are now living practically in windowless cells, sleep on bunk beds and the crampedness of the room is such that two persons can hardly fail to bump into each other. And it isn’t surprising; they have only six square metres of residential floor space. There is one toilet for 28 people and one shower room... ventilation bad... rooms not kept at a reasonable temperature...terrible living conditions... mockery of human dignity... the best American sportsmen are not living in Lake Placid at all.’⁴³⁷

However, the US magazine *Sports Illustrated* also commented on such issues, describing the rooms as ‘...tiny to the point of incipient claustrophobia’.⁴³⁸ Unlike with Afghanistan news,

⁴³² Examples are: IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 12th February 1980, 0200, no.13; and, 1430, no.8; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 11TH February 1980, 0900, 1.8; IWM/SU/C/216: RM N.Am 19th February 1980, 2300, 5; RM Eng Asia 11th February 1980, 1400, 1.13

⁴³³ *Sports Illustrated*, 9th April 1979, ‘The Olympic Getaway’

⁴³⁴ Ibid

⁴³⁵ Ibid

⁴³⁶ Ibid

⁴³⁷ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 12th February 1980, 1430, no.8

⁴³⁸ *Sports Illustrated*, 9th April 1979, ‘The Olympic Getaway’

Radio Moscow reporting of the Lake Placid facilities was not framed in an exceptional manner, it seems to have merely followed the general trend of many news outlets – one of criticism.

Further criticism of the Games came due to claims of costly products and bad organisation in and around Lake Placid. Radio Moscow cited *AFP* and *Reuters* reports on a ‘lack of amenities and high prices’ as further proof of the struggles the Olympic movement was having in the United States.⁴³⁹ The Home service even reported on ‘The Chaos at Lake Placid’ with a summary of world news on the matter.⁴⁴⁰ This included stories such as,

*‘... lack of buses... several people have been taken to hospital after standing in freezing queues... poor accommodation for judges; journalists complain of being housed too far away... enormous dogs searching for the possible presence of drugs.’*⁴⁴¹

North American listeners heard that,

*‘...many people had already warned about the difficulties in the organisation at Lake Placid. The prediction came true... in the first days of the Games the transportation problem was admitted by the authorities, and complaints were numerous about services such as lack of restaurants and cafes, and rip-off prices. Newsmen complained about communications and insufficient information. The athletes were put up in a building which will be used as a penitentiary when the Games are over... imagine the hullabaloo the US media would raise if this happened in Moscow during the summer Olympics.’*⁴⁴²

Radio Moscow broadcast variations of these criticisms throughout its network – World Service listeners even heard about ‘breaches of the victory ceremony rules’.⁴⁴³ However, the key point was made in the North American broadcast – if these problems had happened in the Soviet Union, what would the US media have made of it? It was a point designed to suggest that there was anti-Sovietism inherent in US reporting, something applicable to more than just sports reporting.

Whilst North American listeners heard this, the crux of the report to Soviet listeners really honed in on how the Olympic boycott campaign had affected Lake Placid – ‘...the Americans were making so much noise about boycotting the Olympics that they forgot to organise the

⁴³⁹ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 16th February 1980, 1445, no.16

⁴⁴⁰ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 18th February 1980, 1400, no.6

⁴⁴¹ Ibid

⁴⁴² IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 19th February 1980, 2300, 5

⁴⁴³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 17th February 1980, 1300, 1.10

Winter Olympics at Lake Placid even tolerably well.’⁴⁴⁴ The potential for boycott remained a constant narrative in the reporting throughout the Lake Placid Games, with one Soviet commentator claiming he had ‘...tears of pride and bitterness in his eyes...’ as ‘the competition in Lake Placid is taking place to an accompaniment of a furious anti-Soviet campaign unleashed by the ruling circles of the USA.’⁴⁴⁵ It was the ruling circles of the USA, not the USA as a whole, who Radio Moscow claimed were instigating the campaign. From Vance to Carter to Brown, it was members of the US Administration turning up and trying to influence committees, sportsmen and the public. The boycott reporting used an adaptation of the divisive frame to show it was the campaign of a government administration and not a people. However, all of this was combined with criticism of the US Administration’s attitude to the Olympic movement to create a large picture of anti-US discord around the world.⁴⁴⁶

The reason for all these comments appears quite simple – they were designed to contrast with the upcoming summer Games in Moscow, to show Soviet superiority. Lord Killanin had noted the progress made in Moscow, with the Soviet Olympic village reported to be 90% complete, ‘...with only finishing work remaining to be done, and would be commissioned very soon.’⁴⁴⁷ The workers had even set up a ‘special subbotnik for peace’, with earnings going to the peace fund.⁴⁴⁸ A ‘subbotnik’ was a voluntary day of work – this suggested the people were firmly behind the government over the Olympics, in contrast to the divisiveness between government and people Radio Moscow suggested existed in the US and elsewhere. By 20th February, Radio Moscow was telling Soviet listeners about the new international and long-distance telephone exchange opened for journalists in time for the summer Games, as well as how the refurbishment and modernisation of the Olympic stadium was now complete, after two and a half years, and the stadium was ready for the Games.⁴⁴⁹ There was even a report on traffic management strategy during the Games, explaining the restrictions on various types of vehicle, and a new traffic management system that would increase the capacity of Moscow’s roads by 20%, whilst reducing the number of accidents by 10%.⁴⁵⁰ This was in stark contrast to the reports about facilities and traffic management at Lake Placid, once again highlighting

⁴⁴⁴ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 18th February 1980, 1400, no.6

⁴⁴⁵ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 16th February 1980, 1745, no.4, p.3-4

⁴⁴⁶ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 16th February 1980, 1430, no.1

⁴⁴⁷ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 15th February 1980, 1410

⁴⁴⁸ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 17th February 1980, 0500, no. 14

⁴⁴⁹ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 20th February 1980, 1530, no.5; 1830, no.2

⁴⁵⁰ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 22nd February 1980, 1100, ‘Red, Amber, Green’; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th February 1980, 0700, no.6

perceived Soviet superiority.⁴⁵¹ There was however, one story that praised the Lake Placid Games though, and it focused on the atmosphere – which ‘was an answer to those who are attempting to undermine the Olympic movement.’⁴⁵² At least Lake Placid managed something right – something that could be used to condemn the proposed boycott of the summer Games.

There were stories contrasting Lake Placid with Moscow, as outlined above, but the majority of reports, five months before the Games were due to open, were not about facilities or sportsmen – the majority of the stories revolving around it were concentrated on the boycott proposal. President Carter’s boycott threat was less than a month old at this point, his demand for troops to withdraw from Afghanistan by 19th February was passing as the Lake Placid Games commenced. Yet Radio Moscow did not dwell on this. When telling listeners about the boycott, the station focused on those who were annoyed by it and those who had rejected it. There was an element of localisation applied to these reports. For example, British & Irish service listeners heard in a listeners’ letters show about the ‘...slandorous campaign to boycott the Moscow Olympics... in the Western media’, African listeners heard an African sports official refute doubts over African participation, Serb-Croat listeners heard that the US Olympic Committee was against the boycott, and North American listeners heard a US weightlifter condemn Carter’s boycott attempts.⁴⁵³

There was a difference between regions here, Eastern European listeners and those listening to the Arabic service tended to hear far less criticism of the boycott and far more praise for the Moscow Games. For example, Czech listeners heard about the excellent conditions for journalists in Moscow, Hungarian listeners heard about Hungarian deliveries to Moscow for the Games, Arabic listeners heard praise for the Olympic preparation made by the Algerian embassy.⁴⁵⁴ However, Polish listeners were told alongside how the Olympic Games symbolise peace that the ‘US Cold War attitude and Government pressure on athletes is unprecedented’.⁴⁵⁵ The Radio Moscow message may have varied within regions, but the overall statement was clear – there was criticism for the boycott and praise for the preparations made in Moscow.

⁴⁵¹ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 18th February 1980, 0310, no.7

⁴⁵² IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 26th February 1980, 0400, no.12c

⁴⁵³ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 23rd February 1980, 2000, 8; RM Eng Africa 25th February 1980, 1700, 1.13; RM N.Am 28th February 1980, 2300, 1.11; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Serb-Croat 28th February 1980, 1700, 1.10

⁴⁵⁴ IWM/SU/E/174 RM Czech 21st February 1980, 1730, 3; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Hungarian 28th February 1980, 1800, 5; IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 28th February 1980, 1530, 1.6

⁴⁵⁵ IWM/SU/E/176 RM Polish 28th February 1980, 3

However, there was no mention of the reason the United States was pressing for a boycott. On 12th February, the Home Service gave listeners a commentary headlined ‘USA- To Destroy the Olympic Movement’.⁴⁵⁶ The purpose of the piece was to tell listeners,

*‘...the White House let it be known that it intends to destroy the IOC if it does not capitulate in the face of American pressure. Carter is using his pressure, also via US allies in NATO, in order to thwart the Moscow Olympic Games and to prove that he is capable of achieving this. It has never happened before that a President... tried to trifle with the fate of the Olympic movement, with the fate of the sportsmen who have gathered to show their physical strength, stamina and skill, for his narrow political aims, the aims of the election campaign.’*⁴⁵⁷

The conclusion was clear, the boycott campaign was due to Jimmy Carter’s desire for re-election. There was no mention of punishing the Soviet Union for the invasion of Afghanistan, but the report used the frames of people harm, domestic issues, and imperialism (in terms of the US trying to force its will on others). Additionally, there was the harm frame, as a means of emphasising what the US policies were supposedly doing to the entire Olympic movement. Furthermore, a quantity frame was employed to show it was a campaign lacking support across the spectrum. Not only did Radio Moscow tell Soviet listeners that Soviet citizens were indignant over US Olympic attitudes, but it also reported on the rejection of the boycott by the majority of the IOC, by an Hungarian sports official, the Japanese Olympic Committee (who had condemned Carter’s use of the Games for election purposes), and even the Los Angeles Olympic Committee and a pro-Games group in California.⁴⁵⁸ Soviet listeners also heard that the European Economic Community (EEC) Foreign Ministers had refused to discuss the boycott, that 80% of West German sportsmen (in a poll) were against ‘Carter’s Olympic boycott’, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, a Cuban world boxing champion was reported as being against ‘Carter’s plans to boycott...’.⁴⁵⁹ However, supporting Jimmy Carter was Margaret Thatcher, who had told the British Olympic Association to boycott, and apparently flown into a rage in the House of Commons and shrieked hysterically against the Moscow Olympics.⁴⁶⁰ Shrieking hysterically and raging over the Moscow Games hardly sound like rational actions, perhaps suggesting the

⁴⁵⁶ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 1200, 12th February 1980, no.6

⁴⁵⁷ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 1200, 12th February 1980, no.6, p.2

⁴⁵⁸ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 1300, 12th February 1980, no.13; 1315, no.4; 1945, no.2; 13th February, 1944, no.5; 15th February 1980, 0205, no.11 and 1445, no.20

⁴⁵⁹ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 18th February 1980, 2300, no.3; 20th February 1980, 0130, no.11; 22nd February 1980, 1900, no.9

⁴⁶⁰ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 18th February 1980, 1430, no.6; 1600, no.14

boycott itself was not a rational or logical action. This was not something that was repeated to listeners in Britain & Ireland.

There were similarities between the reporting of the Winter Olympics and the Summer Olympic boycott campaign. Lake Placid was presented via Radio Moscow broadcasting as a disorganised shambles, through examples of transportation problems and facilities issues, and the boycott campaign, with its lack of support and failures in Africa and Lake Placid, was also presented as failing in the same shambolic fashion. They were also both accused of not considering the needs of the ordinary person, whether athlete or citizen. However, the most significant development at this time was the increasing emphasis on why the boycott campaign was failing. Previously, it had just been dismissed, but now Radio Moscow was increasingly using news stories as examples to fit into a boycott failure frame, from athletes' condemnation, to state officials refusing to meet boycott advocates such as Muhammad Ali, and other groups just rejecting the boycott out of hand. As the boycott campaign became more serious, the broadcaster began to frame it more around domestic issues, as it had been doing with reporting of the wider reaction to Afghanistan. These took the place of the invasion of Afghanistan in reporting the reasons behind the boycott campaign.

6.3 REPORTING ON AFGHANISTAN

6.3.1 *Before the Uprising*

The big event in Afghanistan during February was not on the 19th, the deadline demanded for Soviet withdrawal, but instead on the 22nd, the day of a mass uprising in Kabul against the Soviet-backed government.⁴⁶¹ It did not suggest safety and security, or seem to support the normalisation frame, yet Radio Moscow still used it to reinforce and further justify Soviet actions. After the uprising, which was only briefly reported, there were stories about how patriotic Afghans had repelled the CIA/imperialist inspired uprising and how Kabul was 'normalising'.⁴⁶² Helping to support the reporting on Afghanistan, at the base of each story remained two clear points – it was foreign groups causing problems for the Afghan population, and the foreign insurgents were losing.

⁴⁶¹ Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*. p.139

⁴⁶² For examples, see: IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 24th February 1980, 2030, no.1; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th February 1980, 1300, 1.2; IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 26th February 1980, 2300, 1.3 and 1.4; IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 22nd February 1980, 2000, 1.4

Examples of this were bountiful throughout the month – on 5th February, Soviet listeners were told that,

*‘Afghan army units with the population’s support crushed a well-equipped gang in the Badakshan province. Another gang is currently being liquidated in the Paktis province. These gangs, according to testimony of those taken captive have been trained in Pakistan and were equipped with US weapons.’*⁴⁶³

Two frames can be seen clearly here. Firstly, the subversion frame – the common claim that the insurgents in Afghanistan were funded externally, particularly by the United States. Secondly, and more common to broadcasts targeting Soviet listeners, there was an emphasis on the Afghan army and the Afghan people defeating the insurgents. This was a newly emerging frame – that of ‘Afghan leadership’, and it was especially prominent in broadcasts via the Home service. Soviet troops were not mentioned as being in the front line, perhaps as a way of reassuring any parents of Soviet soldiers listening and also as a way of playing down the Soviet military involvement. In reality Soviet troops were far more involved on the front line than was admitted.⁴⁶⁴ Radio Moscow may have used the assistance frame when reporting on Soviet actions in Afghanistan, supplying friendly assistance under treaty obligations, but they did not mention what the friendly assistance was actually doing. Instead, it was the Afghans, both civilian and military, who were reported as defeating the insurgents.

Variations of this report were also heard via the World Service, the English language service to Asia, in French broadcasts all over the world, and across both Eastern and Western Europe.⁴⁶⁵ The World Service report even went into some detail about how Zbigniew Brzezinski, the US National Security Adviser, had visited the training grounds of the gangs, even holding their weaponry – these gangs were labelled ‘terrorists’ and accused of brutally murdering students.⁴⁶⁶ This report personally linked a member of the US government with those Radio Moscow accused of murdering innocents.

⁴⁶³ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 5th February 1980, 1200, no.4

⁴⁶⁴ Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, 1979–89*. p.273

⁴⁶⁵ IWM/SU/C/216 RM WSE 8th February 1980, 1500, no.2; IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 7th February 1980, 1400, 1.3; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 6th February 1980, 1730, 2.4; RM Fre Algeria 6th February 1980, 2000, 1.3; RM Fre Africa 6th February 1980, 1700, 1; IWM/SU/D/212 RM Spain 6th February 1980, 2200, 6.2; RM Italian 6th February 1980, 2100, 1.4; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Hungary 5th February 1980, 1800, 1.2; RM Serb-Croat 6th February 1980, 2030, 1.3

⁴⁶⁶ IWM/SU/C/216 RM WSE 8th February 1980, 1500, no.2

Contrasting these claims were reports such as ‘the Afghan people are taking all steps to protect the independence and territorial integrity of the country and ensure a safe and peaceful life.’⁴⁶⁷ Events in Afghanistan were being reported using the frames of Afghan leadership and foreign insurgency. Thus, in one stroke, reporting the defeat of the insurgents seemingly justified why the Soviet Union were in Afghanistan, whilst also highlighting the use of US weapons by the enemy – weapons endorsed by key members of the US Administration. In addition, the statement implied the Afghan population supported the Afghan leadership. Strong words appeared too, such as ‘crushing’, ‘liquidated’ and ‘terrorist’ leaving no margin for doubt – the Afghan army and the Afghan people were beating the rebels and bandits ‘trained in Pakistan...with US weapons’.⁴⁶⁸

However, coverage of the uprising did not seem to appear in broadcasts to North America, Britain & Ireland, or via Radio Moscow’s Arabic services. Instead, in an example of how Radio Moscow localised its broadcasting, the radio used reports of prominent figures denouncing interference in Afghanistan – thus rather than hearing exactly what was happening, listeners heard others denounce what Radio Moscow reported was happening. Hence, whilst Soviet listeners heard that Afghan people had helped fight off foreign insurgents, listeners in North America instead heard more about Amin’s plans for a pro-US dictatorship and the Amin terror – both subtle justifications for the Soviet intervention.⁴⁶⁹ More overtly, North American listeners also heard the rather vague reference to ‘...broad circles of the international press express[ing] concern...’ about US interference in Afghanistan, along with specific references to leaders, such as Indian Prime Minister Gandhi denouncing US arms to Pakistan, and the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* restating that the Soviet Union would leave Afghanistan when all the other foreign invaders had withdrawn.⁴⁷⁰ The US stand was portrayed as causing concern internationally, and quoting *Pravda* was an attempt to put the emphasis back on the United States – once they went, so would the Soviet Union. Once again, the Soviet action in Afghanistan was reported in a defensive manner – using the assistance frame, it was the Soviet Union stepping in to help its neighbour thwart the aggressive plans of the United States.

The same frames were applied to the situation via the Britain & Ireland service, with the addition that British involvement in Afghanistan and elsewhere was due to a desire to copy the

⁴⁶⁷ IWM/SU/C/216 RM WSE 8th February 1980, 1500, no.2

⁴⁶⁸ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 5th February 1980, 1200, no.4

⁴⁶⁹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 6th February 1980, 2300, 1.3; RM N.Am 7th February 1980, 2300, 1.3

⁴⁷⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 8th February 1980, 2300, 6 and 1.2; 9th February 1980, 2300, 1.2

United States.⁴⁷¹ One report about this was followed by an examination of Western press reporting about Afghanistan, making sure listeners knew that anti-Afghan activities had been going on for many years, thus reporting the problems in the country using an historical frame to disassociate events from Soviet movements.⁴⁷² As with the North American broadcasting through, the reporting focused on the reasons behind foreign reporting and foreign actions, not on the situation in Afghanistan or any Soviet or Afghan troop movements. The situation in Afghanistan was being reported not around the actions on the ground, but with a concentration on what was behind the reactions of outside states.

The Arabic service also did not focus on fighting and it did not concentrate on the reasons for foreign involvement either. Instead, the major concern was informing listeners about the religious aspects of life in Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. It carried reports of the 'Prophet's birthday celebrated in Afghanistan', a talk on Muslim life in the Soviet Union which moved on to criticise US actions in and around Afghanistan as 'denounced by God the Almighty', and a piece citing Babrak Karmal's defence of the Soviet intervention, originally made in *The Times*.⁴⁷³ Clearly, this was another attempt to play down the fears religious leaders had about the Soviet Union, and, as with the reporting of the Islamic Conference, to avoid any suggestions that there was a religious war going on with the Soviet Union. Quite the opposite in fact, as listeners heard that 'the Afghani people and all the Muslims [are standing] in cohesion with the new government and are decisively standing up to the plans of imperialism'.⁴⁷⁴ Arabic service listeners did not hear any talk of blaming religion for the upheaval in Afghanistan, it was imperialism that was causing the problems.

However, going against this religious frame, the problems in Afghanistan were blamed on a religious group in a broadcast to the Soviet Home service –

'[those who] burn down houses and schools, murder teachers and party activists and carry out reprisals against children, women and old men... are members of the terrorist organisation "Muslim Brethren"'.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷¹ IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 5th February 1980, 2000, 6

⁴⁷² IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 5th February 1980, 2000, 7.

⁴⁷³ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 5th February 1980, 1200, 2.7, and, 7th February 1980, 1800, 1.3, and, 9th February 1980, 2100, 1.2

⁴⁷⁴ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 7th February 1980, 1800, 1.3

⁴⁷⁵ IWM/SU/B/525 RM Home 28th February 1980, 1900, no.9

Soviet troops were in Afghanistan to help stop ‘terrorists’ murdering presumably innocent groups, which was a common way the broadcaster framed the situation. However, adding an element of religion to the disturbances was rare for Radio Moscow, and nothing like this was ever heard on the Arabic service. Even criticism of Pakistan seems to have been kept to a minimum via the Arabic service, there were no mentions of training camps or a US arms deal. As with the North American and Britain & Ireland services, there was nothing specific on any actions or events taking place in Afghanistan, just the assertion that the United States was behind it all.

On the eve of the Kabul uprising, Radio Moscow was telling the world how Pashtun elders were ready to defend Afghanistan from imperialism. Home service listeners heard that there had been a large Soviet-Afghan meeting and that Afghans had praised the new stage of the April revolution.⁴⁷⁶ A ‘message to the Ministry of Border Affairs’ appeared in broadcasts to Asia, North America, and via the World Service, informing listeners that ‘the elders in the Pashto tribes living in the areas bordering with Pakistan have declared their readiness to defend Afghanistan against imperialist interference.’⁴⁷⁷ This all fitted with how the situation in Afghanistan had been portrayed ever since the Soviet advance in December 1979. The imperialism frame was again emphasised, but coming to prominence now was the Afghan control frame – it was the Afghan people who were ready to fight imperialism, there was no mention of the Soviet military assistance.

This Afghan control frame also appeared via the North American service on 21st February, the day before the uprising -

*‘According to reports from Kabul, mass rallies and demonstrations in support of the people’s Government and against interference in the country’s affairs by the United States and China have been taking place in other provinces in Afghanistan.’*⁴⁷⁸

This was a rare occurrence of Radio Moscow reporting events in Afghanistan to North American listeners, but then it was about support not conflict. It also reinforced the frames used to report the situation around US insurgency and widespread Afghan support for the Soviet backed regime, and the broadcast itself is another example of a method Radio Moscow often

⁴⁷⁶ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 21st February 1980, 1900, no.6; 1745, ‘International Diary’, no.2; 1630, no.9

⁴⁷⁷ Quoted from - IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 21st February 1980, 1600, 1.5; Equivalent at IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 21st February 1980, 2300, 1.6; IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Asia 22nd February 1980, 1400, 1.4

⁴⁷⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 21st February 1980, 2300, 1.6

used for reporting news – citing an external source. The following day there was a major uprising in Kabul.

6.3.2 Reporting the Uprising

The first reports of the uprising appeared at 1430 [GMT] in broadcasts to the Soviet Union. Reporting on an official statement from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Afghanistan, the broadcast declared that –

‘...on the morning of 22nd February, foreign agents and mercenaries, British, US, Pakistani and Chinese henchmen, resorted to open instigation and subversive actions in Kabul, attempting to disturb the peace in the city. In the interests of observing the democratic standards, the government of Afghanistan strove to prevent these inflammatory actions. However, the venal mercenaries, (? and contingents of) the country’s national (?? Army), began openly to indulge in a plunderous pogrom. In order to secure safety of the life and to safeguard the property of the citizens of Kabul, the Afghan Ministry of Internal Affairs found it necessary to declare martial law in the city and to undertake the most decisive measures against those guilty of the actions. A curfew has been declared in the city... The government of Afghanistan is in full control of the situation.’⁴⁷⁹

The same statement was also broadcast via the Dari service to Afghanistan, emphasising the involvement of the United States and China.⁴⁸⁰ The uprising was a major event and listeners to Radio Moscow services worldwide heard how the foreign mercenary led uprising had been put down, although all the reporting had an after-the-event air to it – the uprising *had* been put down and the government *was* in control. It was not reported as an Afghan uprising against the Soviet-backed Karmal government though. The uprising was reported using the subversion frame, in this instance listing a host of agents and mercenaries from foreign states. However, the key phrase was ‘plunderous pogrom’, suggesting the uprising was motivated by theft and damage rather than politics. Those committing the uprising were ‘mercenaries’ – another word evoking ideas of people motivated by greed and not much else. Just as significantly was the way the Afghan government was reported as being in full control of the situation – not only was there the implication of it acting quickly, but also acting decisively.

⁴⁷⁹ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 22nd February 1980, 1430, no.1 [Question marks inserted by BBC Monitor]

⁴⁸⁰ IWM/SU/F/ RM Dari 22nd February 1980, 1530

Initial reports of the uprising as heard by World Service listeners also blamed ‘agents of Britain, US, Pakistan and China’, but there was an additional emphasis on control – ‘The Ministry of the Interior underlined that the government was in full control of the situation and was capable to resist any provocations and aggression.’⁴⁸¹ Later in the day, listeners heard that, ‘the Afghan security forces have arrested a CIA agent, Robert Lee, in Kabul. Sixteen Pakistani and a group of counter-revolutionaries have also been arrested... foreign agents attempted to provoke unrest in the city’.⁴⁸² This reemphasised several frames used to report Afghanistan. Firstly, the Afghan leadership frame, secondly, that it was US led subversion causing disturbances, thirdly, the insurgency frame highlighting that those causing trouble in Afghanistan were not only backed by foreign regimes, but were foreign people themselves – it was not the Afghan people rising up. The Afghan government, Radio Moscow announced, had condemned ‘the undeclared war against Afghanistan’.⁴⁸³ Except for blaming foreign agents, there were no reports about why the uprising took place, but there was an emphasis on how the situation had been resolved and how the Soviet-backed Afghan government was in control, beating the foreign funded insurgents, one of whom Radio Moscow was able to name as a CIA agent.

North American and British & Irish listeners heard the situation reported using the same frames. There was admittance that there was an uprising, but that it was firmly because of ‘foreign agents’ and that the government was back in control having declared martial law.⁴⁸⁴ Again, the report used the Afghan leadership frame to show that the Afghan government was in control and beating the foreign insurgents – there was no mention of Soviet troops helping to quell the uprising, or indeed any Soviet involvement. To whichever region Radio Moscow broadcast, the point was clear – the uprising had failed.⁴⁸⁵

Reports about the aftermath of the uprising also made it onto the airwaves of Eastern Europe. However, these reports were brief and may have led listeners in some states to wonder what had happened in Afghanistan. Bulgarian listeners heard about martial law being declared; Czech and Slovak listeners heard that the Afghan government had arrested ‘US-trained terrorists’;

⁴⁸¹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd February 1980, 1600, 1.3

⁴⁸² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd February 1980, 2100, 1.4

⁴⁸³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd February 1980, 2100, 2.2

⁴⁸⁴ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 22nd February 1980, 2300, 1.4

⁴⁸⁵ For examples, see IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 22nd February 1980, 1700; RM Eng Asia 23rd February 1980, 1400, 1.2; In Western Europe: IWM/SU/D/212 RM Spain 22nd February 1980, 2200, 5.3; RM Italy 22nd February 1980, 2100, 1.3; In Eastern Europe: IWM/SU/E/174 RM Czech 23rd February 1980, 1600, 1.2; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Hungary 22nd February 1980, 1800, 1.3; RM Polish 22nd February 1980, 1700, 1.3

Hungarian and Polish listeners heard that a state of emergency had been declared in Kabul, due to 'foreign agents and mercenaries trying to disturb the tranquillity of Kabul'.⁴⁸⁶ Serb-Croat listeners were told that the foreign agents and mercenaries were 'openly plundering and setting fires... the government is in full control of the situation'.⁴⁸⁷ As with other broadcast regions, Radio Moscow wanted to suggest a non-political reason for the uprising, to emphasise the role of foreign mercenaries in Afghanistan and to make clear the government was in control.

Radio Moscow broadcasts in Arabic did not carry news of the uprising at all. This would suggest that whilst the Soviet Union was willing to admit troubles to the rest of the world, with the caveat that they had been overcome, to the Arabic Persian service listeners it did not want to mention anything. There were still reports about the Afghan government accusing the US of an undeclared war, and of the Afghan appeal against 'imperialist sabotage', but BBC Monitoring records no mention of the uprising.⁴⁸⁸ There was also a rare instance of criticism of Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan.⁴⁸⁹ However, several days after the event, reports stated Kabul was 'normalising', but not from what.⁴⁹⁰ The word 'normalising' was used to frame the situation in Afghanistan via many different broadcasts, in an attempt to reiterate the improvements being made in the country with Soviet assistance.

Even where Radio Moscow did not report the initial uprising in Kabul to an audience, they reported the situation in Kabul in terms of the normalisation frame, trying to emphasise how peace and quiet was returning to the streets.⁴⁹¹ Rather than focus on the uprising itself, Radio Moscow was framing reports around the idea that the situation in Kabul was improving. Describing the situation in this way allowed Radio Moscow to suggest that government and officials were in control, to imply a normal state of affairs for the people, and to reaffirm, for

⁴⁸⁶ IWM/SU/E/174 RM Bulgarian 22nd February 1980, 1630, 1.3; RM Czech 23rd February 1980, 1600, 1.2; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Hungarian 22nd February 1980, 1800, 1.3; RM Polish 22nd February 1980, 1700, 1.3

⁴⁸⁷ IWM/SU/E/176 RM Serb-Croat 22nd February 1980, 1700, 1.3

⁴⁸⁸ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 23rd February 1980, 1530, 2.6

⁴⁸⁹ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 27th February 1980, 1530, 2.7

⁴⁹⁰ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 27th February 1980, 2100, 1.6

⁴⁹¹ 'Normalising', or 'becoming normal' appeared almost everywhere – IWM/SU/B/525 RM Home 26th February 1980, 0130, 'International Diary', no.3; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 24th February 1980, 2100, 1.2; IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 24th February 1980, 2000, 1.2; IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 25th February 1980, 2300, 1.2; IWM/SU/C/216 RM Eng Africa 24th February 1980, 1700, 1.3; RM Eng Asia 25th February 1980, 1400, 1.2; IWM/SU/E/174 RM Bulgaria 25th February 1980, 1630, 1.2; RM Czech 24th February 1980, 1600, 1.3; RM Finn 24th February 1980, 1630, 1.3; RM Hungary 26th February 1980, 2000, 2c; IWM/SU/D/212 RM Swede 26th February 1980, 1900, 1.3; RM Spain 25th February 1980, 2200, 4.2

those who may have been questioning it, the reason why the Soviet troops were in Afghanistan at this time and the success they were having.

In the days after the uprising, Radio Moscow reiterated TASS claims of US, Chinese, Pakistan and British involvement in Afghanistan, the objective being to leave listeners with no doubts as to who caused the problems in Kabul.⁴⁹² Additionally, the insurgents were accused of beginning ‘...to stage pogroms and kill women and children’.⁴⁹³ The foreign funded insurgents were murdering innocents, and the word ‘pogrom’ was suggestive of systematic murder and destruction. The statement was using a people harm frame to show what foreign funding was doing. For the first time, the World Service also implied the use of Soviet troops to dispel the uprising – ‘...Soviet troops were introduced to Afghanistan, at the Afghan Government’s request, to repel aggression.’⁴⁹⁴ It did not specifically say Soviet troops were involved in stopping the uprising, but the implication here was they were. This was not repeated on the Home service.

Before the uprising the Home service had repeated a claim made in a *Pravda* article that there was an ‘Undeclared War on Afghanistan’.⁴⁹⁵ This was later repeated via the English language World Service, although this time attributed to the *Kabul New Times*.⁴⁹⁶ By the end of the month this same statement, an ‘undeclared war’, was being reiterated, only this time with the addendum that the Soviet Union would only withdraw from Afghanistan once the United States had withdrawn. The ‘undeclared war’ was a justification for Soviet involvement, and meant they could, with the feeling that they had justified their position, cite the likes of Brezhnev, who North American listeners heard on the 27th February had said the Soviet Union would withdraw from Afghanistan when the foreign aggression went.⁴⁹⁷ The following day, US listeners heard Vladimir Pozner’s commentary on the situation, in which he reiterated, almost verbatim, Brezhnev’s statement –

‘We will be ready to begin withdrawing our troops as soon as an end is put to all forms of outside interference aimed against the Government and people of Afghanistan. Let the

⁴⁹² IWM/SU/B/525 RM Home 25th February 1980, 0100, no.7; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 26th February 1980, 2100, 1.4; IWM/SU/C/216: RM GBI 26th February 1980, 2000, 3, and, RM N.Am 26th February 1980, 2300, 1.4

⁴⁹³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 26th February 1980, 2100, 1.4

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid

⁴⁹⁵ IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 5th February 1980, 0600, no.1

⁴⁹⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 12th February 1980, 0900, 1.7

⁴⁹⁷ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 27th February 1980, 2300, 1.4

*United States, together with Afghanistan's neighbours guarantee that, and the need for Soviet military aid in Afghanistan will cease to exist.*⁴⁹⁸

Brezhnev was blaming the United States for the problems in Afghanistan and, as with previous reports, was placing the emphasis on them, rather than the Soviet Union, to improve the situation. For devoted listeners to Radio Moscow, this would have been entirely understandable – whichever region of the world they were in they would have heard about US, Chinese, British, or other imperialist interference in Afghanistan.⁴⁹⁹ Home Service listeners even heard a reiteration of an *Izvestiya* report about how Afghans 'speak with gratitude and great warmth about the peace-loving foreign policy position of the Soviet Union' – again justifying Soviet involvement.⁵⁰⁰ Listeners in some regions may not have heard about specific events, but the Soviet broadcaster was attempting to make clear throughout February that the problems, even those unreported by Radio Moscow, were caused by the US and its allies, and that normal Afghans favoured Soviet assistance.

Radio Moscow also reiterated claims that the previous President of Afghanistan, Hafizullah Amin, had been accused of planning a pro-US dictatorship.⁵⁰¹ They continued to press the assertion that the United States had been operating in Afghanistan since long before the Soviet Union was forced to intervene, using a history frame to give listeners the impression that the Soviet intervention had not caused the current situation. Home service listeners heard that the CIA had been involved for more than a year, World Service listeners heard the agency had been involved 'for many months', whilst listeners to the Britain & Ireland service heard this involvement stretched back over 3 years to 1977!⁵⁰² Radio Moscow was hitting back at accusations about Soviet actions in Afghanistan by claiming the CIA, and the United States in general, had been causing subversion in the country for more than a year, if not three. This historical frame helped justify the Soviet intervention, and alongside the 'normalisation' frame, showed the Soviet assistance was helping to fix a long term problem.

⁴⁹⁸ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 28th February 1980, 0030, 2

⁴⁹⁹ Some examples being: IWM/SU/B/525 RM Home 26th February 1980, 0200, no.9; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 26th February 1980, 2100, 1.4; IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 27th February 1980, 1.2; RM N.Am 26th February 1980, 2300, 1.4; IWM/SU/E/174 RM Czech 27th February 1980, 1600, 1.3; RM Finn 27th February 1980, 1630, 1.3; IWM/CU/D/212 RM Swede 27th February 1980, 1900, 1.4; RM Spain 27th February 1980, 1730, 1.3; IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 27th

⁵⁰⁰ IWM/SU/B/525 RM Home 27th February 1980, 1600, no.5

⁵⁰¹ IWM/SU/B/525 RM Home 28th February 1980, 2340, 'International Diary', no.2; IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 28th February 1980, 2300, 1.5

⁵⁰² IWM/SU/B/525 RM Home 28th February 1980, 2340, 'International Diary', 2; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th February 1980, 1500, 2; IWM/SU/C/216 RM GBI 28th February 1980, 2000, 1.3

Defence of Soviet Union actions in Afghanistan seemed to partly rely on pronouncing the US and its allies as hypocrites – they were the ones arming the bandits, whom the Soviet-supported Afghans defeated; they were the ones inciting uprisings – again defeated by the Soviet-backed patriotic Afghans. Finally, they were the ones condemning Soviet involvement in the country, yet Radio Moscow persistently tried to highlight US involvement in causing problems within Afghanistan. Listeners may have been reading criticisms of the Soviet Union in the domestic press, but Radio Moscow was trying its hardest to show that those reports lacked, or even twisted, the full facts. The events on the ground were not reported for what they were, rather they were framed by what Radio Moscow believed were the reasons behind events.

6.4 SUMMARY

February saw the high profile boycott campaigns of Muhammad Ali and Cyrus Vance, it also saw an uprising in the Afghan capital and the deadline for Soviet withdrawal pass without action – and Radio Moscow ignored the latter. There was nothing that signalled a breakthrough for the boycott campaign or the anti-boycott campaign. The former may have been stuttering, but it was certainly not a campaign that Radio Moscow could easily dismiss anymore. However, whilst Radio Moscow did not always report on the campaign or the uprising, it seems that it was not actually the goal to hide what was happening. They needed to report on these situations so they could use the frames that helped promote Soviet actions and criticise the US actions. Additionally, the actions of Ali and Vance left themselves open for criticism, and they faced this not only from Radio Moscow, but from many other groups around the world as well.

The reporting of the uprising and the reporting of the boycott campaigning may have been separated by Radio Moscow, but the frames used in the reporting of both during February were remarkably similar. There was an emphasis on the human element in the frames used, and whether it was in Afghanistan or the boycott campaign, innocent people were being harmed by the actions of others. Equally, the harm to these innocents was linked right to the top of the US Administration, personified through the examples of Brzezinski visiting training basis for the insurgents, or the statement of Vance directly calling for a boycott or moving of the Games. History was again invoked to help support the Soviet argument, with vague claims about foreign involvement in Afghanistan long before the Soviet Union official assistance arrived in December 1979.

Against this backdrop of US aggression and reports using the imperialism frame, the typical Afghan was reported as being happy with the Soviet assistance, and those quoted on the boycott campaign, from outside the US Administration, were all firmly against the plan. The uprising

was reported as one of foreign insurgents, and foreign-backed insurgents, causing planned trouble and murdering innocents. These were portrayed as ‘mercenaries’ and there was a definite suggestion the uprising was to do with greed rather than an ideological dislike of the Soviet Union or the Karmal government.

Unlike reporting of the State of the Union address, there was considerably less localisation in the broadcasting covering these events. Part of this could be that there was not such a range of material for Radio Moscow to pick and choose from. However, Radio Moscow did work with what it had. There was a noticeable difference in the broadcast coverage of Muhammad Ali’s tour – Home service coverage was critical but elsewhere coverage was more or less non-existent. The World Service repeated the claims of the Home Service, and the English language African service called it dishonest, as well as a failure. There was no localisation though, and the same applied to Cyrus Vance’s speech which was portrayed through an imperialist frame, with Home service listeners hearing added emphasis on the upcoming US elections. There was no need at this time to report the boycott campaign in a very localised sense – Radio Moscow could tell the world that the campaign, along with the facilities at Lake Placid, was failing worldwide.

There was clear localisation in the reporting of the Kabul uprising, and it is a prime example of how Radio Moscow tried to avoid reporting events to specific audiences. The Home Service concentrated on explaining away the motives of the insurgents/mercenaries, whilst at the same time emphasising that the Afghan authorities were firmly in control. The World Service reported the same, but diverted attention by combining the personification and harm to people frames when accusing Brzezinski of associating himself with killers. Again the method of not actually directly reporting the incident was displayed via both these stations. Meanwhile, other language broadcasts heard very little. Radio Moscow chose not to broadcast anything further, and instead referred listeners back to pre-existing themes and frames – British listeners heard their government was slavishly copying the US, Arabic listeners heard about Soviet-Islamic cooperation, North American and Eastern European listeners heard that Afghans were in control and that any struggles were the fault of imperialism. It appears that imperialism was the fall-back frame for Radio Moscow at this time.

With the uprising over, there was a distinct shift towards emphasising the Afghan control frame – the government was in control and Afghan armed forces were defeating the insurgents. There was also little in terms of reporting on advances in the Olympic boycott campaign, but there was a considerable amount about the reasons behind it. This follows the analytical frame that had developed previously, as rather than focus on facts, Radio Moscow preferred to deal in opinion.

Alongside some examples of selective reporting and selective coverage of what others were saying, this enabled the furthering of the ultimate frame that Radio Moscow was working toward, that of the United States acting in a wrong and harmful way whilst the Soviet Union acted for peace.

CHAPTER 7

‘OURS WILL NOT GO!’ THE UNITED STATES BOYCOTT IS OFFICIAL

Without the customary applause for a President, on 21st March 1980 Jimmy Carter entered a room full of athletes, who had trained and dreamed of a place on the 1980 US Olympic team, and announced,

*‘I can’t say at this moment what other nations will not go to the Summer Olympics in Moscow. Ours will not go. I say that not with any equivocation; the decision has been made.’*⁵⁰³

The boycott threat had moved from words to actions. The US would not be in Moscow. The President’s speech encompassed far more than just a statement about the Olympics – as *The Times* reported, Carter had explained ‘...Soviet troops had taken thousands of lives in Afghanistan, and hundreds of thousands would be lost elsewhere if the United States did not make sacrifices to preserve world peace’.⁵⁰⁴ The first speech made by the US President on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had instigated trade sanctions as the major punishment, with a threat to not attend the Olympics seemingly a minor addition – now the Olympic boycott was the major way of punishing the Soviet Union.

This chapter examines the broadcasts of Radio Moscow from 18th March 1980 to 5th April 1980. The primary focus is on how Radio Moscow reported President Carter’s announcement, but this time frame also captures reaction to the British Parliamentary vote of 18th March supporting a boycott, the subsequent British Olympic Association (BOA) vote of 25th March, overriding the Parliament and deciding that athletes were free to choose for themselves. Not only did this show the divisiveness of the boycott campaign within states, but it also highlighted the difficulty for supposedly free and liberal governments in condemning the Soviet Union for human rights abuses, such as the exile of the dissident Andrei Sakharov in February, and trying to force their own people not to go to Moscow.

President Carter’s speech changed the focus of the reporting of the boycott campaign. It could no longer be framed as a suggestion or a threat that could continually be dismissed as mere

⁵⁰³ Jimmy Carter, “Remarks to Representatives of U.S. Teams to the 1980 Summer Olympics, 21st March 1980,” accessed September 12, 2013, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=33171>.

⁵⁰⁴ *The Times* 24th March 1980, p.7, column H. ‘IOC may help athletes who defy boycott call’

words – the United States would not be in Moscow. Radio Moscow had to change its approach, and this is the focus of the chapter. However, there were shifts in the frames used to report the situation in Afghanistan at this time, and whilst reports were daily, they remained consistent with previous months – any new events were slotted in to pre-existing frames focusing on foreign insurgency, US funding and imperialism, or Afghan happiness with the Soviet assistance. The boycott campaign did become more prominent though, suggesting a sudden realisation that it was very real and needed more forcefully attacking.

This chapter firstly examines the broadcasting surrounding the British House of Commons vote, before moving on to focus on the frames used to report President Carter's address to US athletes. Following this is a study of the frames used to report two European meetings regarding the boycott and the British Olympic Association's own vote not to boycott. The final section analyses the reporting of Afghanistan, both in relation to the boycott and as a separate entity.

7.1 THE BRITISH BOYCOTT RESOLUTION

After a lengthy debate on 17th March, the House of Commons voted in favour, 315-147, of the resolution,

*'That this House condemns the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and believes that the United Kingdom should not take part in the Olympic Games in Moscow.'*⁵⁰⁵

Margaret Thatcher had been a vociferous supporter of boycotting the Games all along, now she had the official support of the British Parliament. Not only that, Parliament had also strongly condemned the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

With so many states waiting to see what others would do about potentially boycotting the Moscow Olympics, this was a significant development. The British Parliament had resolved to support the campaign – others may therefore have felt safer in following the US lead. However, the final decision to attend still lay with the BOA, and they would not be meeting until 25th March.

As important a development as the House of Commons resolution was, Radio Moscow only reported it over the airwaves to Britain & Ireland, and then only with a broadcast on the 18th

⁵⁰⁵ *Hansard*, HC Debate, 17th March 1980 vol.981 cc.31-168, line 168

March, repeated on 21st March.⁵⁰⁶ Personifying the report, the station described it as Margaret Thatcher's 'anti-Olympic political show', and claimed that '...Britain happens to be the only country that has given its open and enthusiastic backing to the boycott idea conceived in Washington.'⁵⁰⁷ Not only was this a take on the quantity frame, telling listeners the US boycott only had one firm supporter – it is almost the imperialism frame in reverse – rather than report on the US imposing its will, Britain was being reported as an enthusiastic follower. Radio Moscow pushed this frame of following the US further, claiming the debate was 'designed to cater to the American rather than the British taste' and 'probably Washington is giving three cheers to the 'anti-Olympic political show...'.⁵⁰⁸

The divisive frame was explicit here too. Radio Moscow claimed 'Mrs Thatcher's intention of boycotting the Games ran counter to the consensus of the British people', and supported this claim with reference to an *Observer* public opinion poll asserting that 69% of Britons wanted British athletes to go to the Moscow Games.⁵⁰⁹ Radio Moscow appears to have been attempting to create a divide between the British people and the British government, a divide that fits with the previous claims about governmental policy supporting US actions going against the wishes and wants of the British people.

The personification frame can also be seen in the broadcasting on this vote. Rather than reporting that it was the British Parliament as a whole that had voted to support the boycott, Radio Moscow focused on describing it as the 'Thatcher Cabinet', the 'Conservative Cabinet', and more pointedly, the work of 'Mrs Margaret Thatcher'.⁵¹⁰ Whilst there were 314 other Members of Parliament who voted for the resolution, only one name was repeatedly mentioned – the Prime Minister herself. Highly vocal in her support for a boycott in the months before this vote, it appears that Radio Moscow attempted to frame the boycott in Britain as Margaret Thatcher's own personal crusade. As with reporting of the boycott campaign in other regions of the world, where the focus tended to be Jimmy Carter, the implication was that it was one person forcing through a boycott against the tide of public opinion.

The commentary on the 18th personalised the debate around the wants of Margaret Thatcher, but it centred on the Olympics. There was no mention that the debate considered Afghanistan or

⁵⁰⁶ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 18th March 1980, 2000, Section 2 'Glance at the British Scene'; 21st March 1980, 2000, section 8.1

⁵⁰⁷ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 18th March 1980, 2000, Section 2 'Glance at the British Scene', p.1-2

⁵⁰⁸ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 18th March 1980, 2000, Section 2 'Glance at the British Scene', p.2

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid

⁵¹⁰ Ibid

that the vote condemned Soviet actions in the country, and there was no reference to Afghanistan and the Olympics being in any way linked. The focus was on the Olympic boycott, as a personal projection of Margaret Thatcher, as a policy instigated by Washington and as an idea that the majority of the British people disagreed with. It was also presented as an opportunity to deny human rights to the British people. Radio Moscow claimed it showed that the Thatcher Cabinet '... [had] more than disregard for basket three of the Helsinki conference [humanitarian and cultural cooperation]... the overriding question is how much it cares indeed for the democratic rights and political liberties of its subjects in the United Kingdom.'⁵¹¹ Listeners were told that the British authorities were '...clamping down on the athletes so as to discourage them from taking part in the Moscow games.'⁵¹² In later years, the 100 metre Moscow Olympic champion Alan Wells commented on this pressure, telling *The Guardian*,

*'We received maybe half-a-dozen letters from 10 Downing Street trying to put us off. I opened one. There was a picture with a letter saying this is what the Russians are doing. It showed a dead Afghan girl with a doll. I can still see the picture even now as if it were yesterday.'*⁵¹³

Radio Moscow did not report anything quite that extreme, but they did report that,

*'...senior officials of the Foreign Office summon all members of the British Olympic Association and exert pressure and try to browbeat them into not going to Moscow...the government has adopted a decision which has no precedent: not to grant leave of absence to civil servants and armed servicemen to go to the Olympic Games this summer. By rights all this can take place in a police State only...this could have adverse effects on the freedom of British subjects in peace time.'*⁵¹⁴

This did not appear in the debate, although discussion of what to do with civil servants and armed forces personnel did arise, with one MP concluding,

⁵¹¹ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 18th March 1980, 2000, Section 2 'Glance at the British Scene', p.2

⁵¹² IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 18th March 1980, 2000, Section 2 'Glance at the British Scene', p.3

⁵¹³ *The Observer Sport Monthly*, 'Thatcher tried to blackmail us not to go to Moscow.' (5th March 2006) Retrieved on 10th February 2014) from <http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2006/mar/05/features.sport9>

⁵¹⁴ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 18th March 1980, 2000, Section 2 'Glance at the British Scene', p.3

*'We have decided that we cannot grant special paid leave... for a purpose that we believe is against our interests. However, how individuals use their annual leave and whether they ask for unpaid leave are matters for the individual in a free society.'*⁵¹⁵

Mr Clement Freud MP even stated that '...we do not have the right to stop those who want to go from going' – and he voted in favour of the resolution!⁵¹⁶ As Radio Moscow avoided reporting the exact phraseology of the House of Commons though, it was able to frame the debate how it chose, in this instance reporting the resolution using the people harm frame, as part of an attempt to instigate draconian measures against the freedoms of the British people.

Attempting to frame the debate in historical terms, Radio Moscow also accused the Thatcher Cabinet of not caring about Britain's prestige as 'a country known as a cradle of sports and famous for its noble traditions.'⁵¹⁷ Boycotting the Olympics apparently undermined this tradition, but there was not the slightest suggestion that refusing to enter the capital of a state that had recently invaded its neighbour may also have been noble and in keeping with the ancient Greek tradition of *ekecheiria* – a cessation of hostilities while the festival took place.⁵¹⁸ But then Afghanistan was not mentioned at all – condemning the Soviet invasion was an intrinsic part of the House of Commons debate and resolution, but this was omitted. Not once was Afghanistan alluded to as even a part of the debate. Thus the commentator did not have to reiterate the by now well-worn justification for the Soviet actions in Afghanistan. More importantly for the frames Radio Moscow used, the further apart the Olympic boycott and Afghanistan could be placed in the minds of the listener, the easier it would have been to portray the boycott as lacking support, as a personal crusade, a human rights travesty, or even part of a long term plan. Hence the complete lack of engagement with the first half of the House of Commons resolution – the boycott allowed Radio Moscow to attack the British establishment, mentioning Afghanistan would have complicated matters.

However, the Radio Moscow coverage was within keeping with British domestic coverage, to an extent. The front page of *The Guardian* ran the headline '315 MPs vote for Olympic boycott', and *The Times* ran the headline 'MPs vote for boycott of Olympics by majority of 168'.⁵¹⁹ Both concentrated on the boycott resolution rather than the condemnation of the Soviet actions in

⁵¹⁵ *Hansard*, HC Debate, 17th March 1980, vol.981 cc.31-168, line 41

⁵¹⁶ *Hansard*, HC Debate, 17th March 1980, vol.981 cc.31-168, line 85

⁵¹⁷ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 18th March 1980, 2000, Section 2 'Glance at the British Scene', p.2

⁵¹⁸ N. Spivey, *The Ancient Olympics* (Oxford University Press, 2004). p.189-190

⁵¹⁹ *The Guardian*, 18th March 1980, p.1; *The Times*, 18th March 1980, p.1

Afghanistan – the Soviet reporting of the vote was only slightly more concentrated on the Olympics than that of the domestic press. There were no mentions of this debate on any other Radio Moscow frequency at this point. Mention was presumably made on the Britain & Ireland service to counter such comments in the British domestic press. Only when the British Olympic Association rejected the government recommendation for a boycott, in its own vote on 25th March, did Radio Moscow deem news from Britain worth reporting to regions worldwide. However, before this happened, President Carter announced that the United States Olympic team would not go to Moscow.

7.2 CARTER'S ANNOUNCEMENT

On 21st March 1980, the athletes hoping to be part of the US Olympic team assembled in a room at the White House and listened as President Carter told them they would not go to Moscow. In the speech, entitled '*Remarks to Representatives of U.S Teams to the 1980 Summer Olympics*', Carter spoke apologetically of this action -

*'I have great admiration for you and a deep feeling for you in this time of challenge and disappointment... You occupy a special place in American life...It's not a pleasant time for me...I hope that at least in the minds of some of you the medal that you might win in competition [alternative Games] and the recognition of a grateful nation will at least partially make up for the sacrifice that you'll have to make...'*⁵²⁰

But he was also highly critical of the Soviet Union actions in Afghanistan –

*'...nations who believe in freedom and...human rights and...peace...[should] not add the imprimatur of approval to the Soviet Union and its government while they have 105,000 heavily armed invading forces in the freedom-loving and innocent and deeply religious country of Afghanistan.'*⁵²¹

As with the British Parliament vote, the reason for the boycott, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, was integral to the speech, and as with the British Parliament vote, the invasion aspect was also ignored by Radio Moscow. However, unlike the British resolution, which Radio Moscow ignored outside of its Britain & Ireland service, the Soviet broadcaster debated President Carter's announcement in broadcasts all around the world. As with the reporting of the House of Commons resolution, the analytical frame was used to report not what was said,

⁵²⁰ Carter, "Remarks to Representatives of U.S. Teams to the 1980 Summer Olympics, 21st March 1980."

⁵²¹ Ibid

but rather the reaction and the implications. Radio Moscow also changed the manner of President Carter's announcement. North American listeners heard that 'Carter met 150 prominent US athletes on Friday and asked them to refrain from participating in the Olympics'.⁵²² The broadcaster presented the listener with the idea that the President had 'asked', rather than told, and that the announcement was actually a question and not a final decision.

The first reaction on the North American service to this announcement was within hours of Carter making the statement. BBC Monitoring notes that on the 22nd March, via the 0030 GMT broadcast, Radio Moscow reported that an 'NOC public opinion poll reveals that 67% of Americans are against the Olympic movement being used for political purposes'.⁵²³ This was broadcast five hours after President Carter made his announcement, but the lack of reference to the specifics of the meeting itself would suggest that this was a pre-planned mode of attack with which to frame whatever Carter happened to say. As with the House of Commons debate, rather than deal with what was said, the speech was reported through the divisive and people harm frames. BBC Monitoring reported that North American listeners heard 'various well-known American athletes quoted arguing against the boycott', and the 'Carter administration's boycott campaign will in the first place backfire against the United States athletes... athletes and non-athletes round the world are hopeful that soberness in the White House will prevail'.⁵²⁴

The Home service also reported the speech using an analytical frame, rather than dealing with its content. On 21st March, just hours before the speech, listeners were informed that the meeting between the President and the athletes would be taking place, and, 'on the pretext of explaining his standpoint, Carter will be attempting to put further pressure on them'.⁵²⁵ This effectively primed the listener for reports after the speech that may have contained bad news for the Olympic Games. Again though, the speech was reported as Carter 'attempting', not telling the athletes they would not be going. There was no hint that it would be a definitive announcement. On the 22nd, in a report about the meeting, Home service listeners heard that '...the gross pressure by the White House has not yielded the desired results...' and,

'Most sportsmen refused to sacrifice the lofty ideals of the International Olympic Movement for the dubious political ambitions of the present Washington

⁵²² IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 22nd March 1980, 2300, 1.9, p.2

⁵²³ IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 22nd March 1980, 0030, Section 5, p.2

⁵²⁴ IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 22nd March 1980, 0030, Section 5, p.2

⁵²⁵ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 21st March 1980, 1330, Section 6, p.2

Administration... an ever greater number of foreign politicians is opposing Carter's appeal'.⁵²⁶

The speech was portrayed as asking, not telling. There was no mention that President Carter had announced the US Olympic team would not be in Moscow, there was merely reporting that US Olympic hopefuls, and their supporters, did not agree with him. The speech was not reported as an outright statement of intent, but it was reported as President Carter versus the athletes – incorporating both the personification and divisive frames.

In a later broadcast to Soviet listeners, Radio Moscow announced that Carter had made an 'emotional appeal', which, joining previous phrases such as hoping 'sobriety' would prevail in the White House, and accusing Margaret Thatcher of 'shrieking' about the boycott campaign, suggest a subtle frame implying those promoting the boycott were irrational.⁵²⁷ Carter was also accused of trying to bribe the athletes – 'the master (khozyain) of the White House promised them special prizes if they agree to take part not in the Moscow Olympics but in the so-called parallel games...'.⁵²⁸ However, listeners were also told that,

'Carter has stated that the Government will use all its power and legal possibilities at its disposal in order to prevent American sportsmen from taking part in the summer Olympic Games'.⁵²⁹

This appears to be the only time Radio Moscow referenced anything said in President Carter's speech – no other BBC Monitor record of the broadcasting network contains reference to the specifics of the statement. However, it is not accurate. Nowhere in the *'Remarks to Representatives of U.S. teams to the 1980 Summer Olympics'* did Carter threaten athletes with using power or legal possibilities – he did mention he had significant power, but the possibilities stated here by Radio Moscow had been mentioned in previous announcements. The tone of the speech was far less threatening than Radio Moscow claimed, with phrases such as 'I hope that you will help me' and 'whatever you decide, as far as your attitude is concerned, I will respect

⁵²⁶ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 22nd March 1980, 1330, Section 7, p.2

⁵²⁷ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 22nd March 1980, 1750, 1.13; IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 22nd March 1980, 0030, Section 5, p.2; IWM/SU/B/524 RM Home 18th February 1980, 1430, no.6; 1600, no.14

⁵²⁸ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 22nd March 1980, 1750, Section 13 – in an example of how the Monitoring Service worked, the Monitor has placed the original Russian word translated as 'the master' in brackets (khozyain). This word can mean both a helpful and caring leader of a household, but also leader of a criminal organisation. The likelihood is the latter was more applicable here.

⁵²⁹ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 22nd March 1980, 1750, no.13

it'.⁵³⁰ Nevertheless, there can be no doubt it was a forceful speech leaving no room for manoeuvre. Whilst the President was willing to respect the attitude of the athletes, the US team were still boycotting and nothing would change that – 'Ours will not go. I say that not with any equivocation...'⁵³¹

The same frames were used to represent the speech to listeners in Britain & Ireland. Listeners were told that the President had met and 'asked' 150 athletes to refrain from participating in the Olympics, and the majority had refused.⁵³² Radio Moscow was not willing to broadcast about the US team actually boycotting the Games – they tried to continue to present it as in discussion, reporting comments from athletes protesting, domestic press polls showing disapproval, and international condemnation. Rather than report that the US President had dictated a path the athletes and many others were against, emphasising the divisive frame, it seems Radio Moscow preferred to suggest the US team could still appear in Moscow. Not only did it suggest the boycott was failing, but it also reveals that Radio Moscow was more concerned with trying to play down the extent of the boycott than it was with promoting news that highlighted divisions within the society of its chief Cold War rival.

Changing the context of the decisive statement to more of a question that could be refused, and reporting the reaction of athletes and the public, appeared in broadcasts to regions and languages such as Africa (in French and English), Sweden, Italy, Greece, Finland, Serbo-Croat and Turkish.⁵³³ The vast majority of broadcasts seem to have been translations of what the English World Service reported – '...athletes and noted sports officials are being subjected to unprecedented and crude pressure...'.⁵³⁴ Again, the word 'pressure' suggests something that can be refused, however difficult that may be. However, unlike broadcasts to Britain & Ireland, or those to North America, the World Service commentary went further than just noting that '...the majority of the American athletes come out for participating in the Moscow Olympics'.⁵³⁵ It also included reference to statements made by others in the United States establishment, such as an assistant White House advisor who, Radio Moscow reported, had said 'the United States will

⁵³⁰ Carter, "Remarks to Representatives of U.S. Teams to the 1980 Summer Olympics, 21st March 1980."

⁵³¹ Ibid

⁵³² IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 22nd March 1980, 2000, Section 1.7

⁵³³ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Africa 23rd March 1980, 1830, Section 1.5; IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Africa 22nd March 1980, 1700, Section 1.14; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Swedish 22nd March 1980, 1900, 1.4; RM Italy 22nd March 1980, 1730, Section 3.5; RM Greek 22nd March 1980 1900, Section 1.d; RM Finnish 22nd March 1980, 1630, Section 3.3; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Serb-Croat 22nd March 1980, 2030, Section 1.7; IWM/SU/F/ RM Turk 22nd March 1980, 1400, Section 5.3.

⁵³⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd March 1980, 1300, Section 2.3

⁵³⁵ Ibid

destroy the Olympic movement if the International Olympic Committee declines to accept the American position'.⁵³⁶ It also differed from the Britain & Ireland service in that it suggested far more than a mere question. The Attorney General, Benjamin Civiletti, according to the World Service, had 'threatened legal action against those American athletes who dare to violate the administration's ban and go to Moscow for the Olympics.'⁵³⁷ Unlike via the North American and Home Service, World Service listeners heard Carter's statement was presented as decisive, rather than as a question. However, it was not something athletes were necessarily going to obey – thus suggesting division.

Again, President Carter's words were not reported, but the reaction to them was, combined with choice statements that appeared threatening – the US Administration was threatening both people and the Olympic movement as a whole. As with the British debate, human rights were evoked, with Washington accused of utterly contradicting the Helsinki Accords, especially 'accords on [the] development of contacts in sport...'.⁵³⁸ This was all suggestive of US actions hurting athletes and harming others.

7.3 THE SPEECH IN BOYCOTT CONTEXT

President Carter's announcement was condemned via all Radio Moscow broadcasts that reported it.⁵³⁹ However, what Radio Moscow also reported fitted into the previous frames used to cover the boycott campaign. Only via one World Service broadcast was there any admission of success on Carter's part – early on 22nd March came the report that 'the meeting was a limited success judging by the results of a poll of the athletes who participated'.⁵⁴⁰ 'Limited success' did not appear again via the airwaves, even though it fitted with the divisive frame that Radio Moscow tried to project.

There seems to have been a regional difference in the Olympic boycott reporting here – the stations that did report news on President Carter and other boycott announcements tended to be those to Western and Eastern Europe, North America and the Soviet Union. Listeners to the Arabic language broadcast did not hear about President Carter's boycott announcement, nor did listeners to languages such as Dari, Ndebele, Shona, Amharic, Swahili, Somali, or French to

⁵³⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd March 1980, 1300, Section 2.3

⁵³⁷ Ibid

⁵³⁸ Ibid

⁵³⁹ The BBC Monitoring reports do not record news on the announcement via Arabic, Dari, Ndebele, Swahili, Somali, Persian, Shona, or the English language Asian service.

⁵⁴⁰ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd March 1980, 0900, Section 9, p.2

Algeria. That is not to say the boycott per se was not reported in these languages – certainly the Arabic, Algerian, Swahili and Persian services carried more general reports. Yet there was very little comment compared to what was being reported to Radio Moscow listeners in Europe, North America and the Soviet Union, or even to English language service listeners in Asia or Africa.⁵⁴¹

President Carter's announcement that the US team would not be attending the Moscow Games was not reported as the standout statement that it in reality was. Unmentioned in some regions, in others it was just another part of the wider boycott story. Letters saying the boycott would fail, statements from athletes and Olympic Committees determined to attend, even reports of whole conferences condemning the campaign – these were just some of the more regular anti-boycott stories around which the Presidential announcement was reported. Previous reporting of the boycott being rejected made it far easier for Radio Moscow to frame President Carter's address as an appeal, a threat, and an attempt to force his will upon an unwilling world, a type of Presidential imperialism frame, than the definitive announcement that it was. To an extent the indecisiveness of state governments and the ambiguity of control between said governments and National Olympic Committees created an almost ideal situation for Soviet foreign broadcasting.

The opinions of the US athletes were reported almost worldwide, but there was an element of localisation with other groups, with athletes, governments and Olympic Committees more closely linked to the listener also mentioned. In broadcasts to Europe, Swedish listeners not only heard about the US athletes' aversion to the boycott idea, but also the Swedish Olympic Committee declaring their intention to attend.⁵⁴² Likewise, Finnish listeners heard that, amongst others, Finnish sportsmen had 'expressed their opposition to a boycott of the Games', East German listeners heard that FRG athletes, at a public meeting in Munich, favoured participation in Moscow, and Italian listeners heard that 'the overwhelming majority of deputies in the Italian Parliament have declared themselves in favour of the Moscow Olympics'.⁵⁴³ Localisation was clearly an important factor in trying to portray the boycott as failing.

⁵⁴¹ For examples, see IWM/SU/F/: RM Arabic 30th March 1980, 2100, Section 3.4 (Interview with IOC Press Commission chairman Samaranch); RM Arabic 24th March 1980, 1530, Section 1.9 (Libya reaffirms attendance at Games); IWM/SU/F/: RM Swahili 23rd March 1980, 1730, Section 2 (*Pravda* editorial on Olympic Games); RM Persian 29 March (page 2 – Delhi Conference); IWM/SU/D/213 RM French Algeria 25th March 1980, 2000, Section 3 – Mailbag.

⁵⁴² IWM/SU/D/ RM Swedish 18th March 1980, 1900, Section 1.7

⁵⁴³ IWM/SU/E/ RM Finnish 25th March 1980, 1630, Section 1.12; RM German 31st March 1980, 2000, Section 1.8; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 22nd March 1980, 1730, Section 2.5

In Africa, English language listeners were told that the Lesotho Foreign Minister had said, 'Lesotho does not believe in a boycott. Lesotho will participate at the Games.'⁵⁴⁴ On 20th March, the same station broadcast a brief roundup of 'opposition to Carter's stand on the Games', quoting an American athlete, an Ethiopian sports official, the Nigerian President, an Angolan newspaper, and, somewhat bizarrely, an Austrian magazine.⁵⁴⁵ The boycott was portrayed as something far away – the US President supported it in the White House far overseas, fellow Africans did not. Listeners to the French language African service heard much the same – letters condemned the boycott whilst US sportsmen and an African sports official were also quoted as being against the idea.⁵⁴⁶

Reporting the failure of the boycott campaign using localised disapproval also occurred in broadcasts to Asia. In amongst reports that the US Olympic Committee was being blackmailed by Jimmy Carter, and a report that the Japanese government would take the advice of the Japanese Olympic Committee, was a report that Sri Lanka was the 106th country to apply to attend the Games – emphasising the quantity of teams Radio Moscow expected in Moscow.⁵⁴⁷ Additionally, the Philippines Olympic Committee was reported to have removed the chairman because he tried to prohibit the football team from attempting to gain a place at the Games.⁵⁴⁸ The message was clear, those in the vicinity of the Asian listener were against the boycott – which Radio Moscow Asian listeners at one point even heard labelled as a 'fiasco'.⁵⁴⁹

These are not the only examples showing that anti-boycott reporting during this period tried to situate itself locally in a clear attempt to frame the situation in a manner that would be more appealing to the listener than just hearing American- or Euro-centric reporting. French Algerian broadcasts mentioned that the Algerian football team would take part in the Olympic football tournament; Arabic broadcasts told how Libya had reaffirmed its intention to participate in the Games whilst quoting letters denouncing the boycott – such as one from a Moroccan listener on 22nd March.⁵⁵⁰ Positive Olympic news was also reported in this manner – for example, Arabic audiences were told about how the Soviet Union was helping to train, and coordinate with,

⁵⁴⁴ IWM/SU/C/218 RM Eng Africa 8th April 1980, 1700, Section 4, p.5

⁵⁴⁵ IWM/SU/C/218 RM Eng Africa 20th March 1980, 1700, Section 5.2 , p.6

⁵⁴⁶ IWM/SU/D/RM Fre Africa 31st March 1980, 1830, Section 3, African Mailbag; 20th March 1980, 1700, Section 3.

⁵⁴⁷ IWM/SU/C/218RM Eng Asia 5th April 1980, 1400, Section 1.11, p.2; 3rd April 1980, 1400, Section 1.11; 31st March 1980, 1400, Section 1.10, p.2

⁵⁴⁸ IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Asia 31st March 1980, 1400, Section 1.10, p.2

⁵⁴⁹ IWM/SU/C/218 RM Eng Asia 2nd April 1980, 1400, Section 1.12, p.2

⁵⁵⁰ IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Algeria 28th March 1980, 2000, Section 2; IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 24th March 1980, 1530, Section 1.9; RM Arabic 22nd March 1980, 1200, Section 4b.

Jordanians in the build-up to the Olympics.⁵⁵¹ Religious facilities at the Games were also emphasised,

*'...large halls are being prepared for prayers... Since the Olympics time coincides with the month of Ramadan... there is a place for at-Tarawih... An Imam will be appointed for these duties'.*⁵⁵²

Not only was Radio Moscow reporting the boycott campaign using local rejections, but it was beginning to frame publicity for the Games around local concerns – in this instance the religious needs of Islamic athletes.

Many of the frames were encapsulated within a *Pravda* article, reiterated worldwide by Radio Moscow both before and after the announcement.⁵⁵³ On 18th March 1980 *Pravda* published a commentary under the heading '*The Price of Ambition*', in which it castigated '*...the scheming enemies of the Olympic movement*'.⁵⁵⁴ Some of the key points were:

*'Certain politicians... brazenly interfered in the international athletic movement, their aim being to wreck the Moscow Olympics to please the personal ambitions of US President Carter.'*⁵⁵⁵

*'Washington politicians are trying to impose the decision to boycott the 1980 Olympics, dictated by the short-term plans of Carter's election headquarters, on other countries at the governmental level and then make the national Olympic committees submit to this decision... what the present US administration would like most of all would be a conflict that would make Americans rally around the current President and would distract them from the internal problems rending the US.'*⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵¹ IWM/SU/F RM Arabic 30th March 1980, Section 2.2

⁵⁵² Ibid

⁵⁵³ 'Pravda Hits US Bid to Block Olympics', (The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol.XXXII, No.11 (16th April 1980), p.7) Editorial recorded on: SU/D/213 RM French 18th March 1980, 1930, section 3; SU/D/214 - RM Swede 18th March 1980, 1900, section 2; RM Spain 18th March 1980, 2000, section 2.1; Port 18th March 1980, 1930, section 2.1; SU/E/ - RM German 23rd March 1980, 2000, section 4; RM Czech 18th March 1980, 1600, section 4; RM Serb 18th March 1980, 2030, section 2.5
17th March 1980 to North America (2300, Section 2) Reappearing on the 23rd via broadcasts to Hungary (2000, Section 2.3), Italy (1730, Section 4.4), Africa in Portuguese (2030, Section 3.3), and the World Service (1300, Section 2.5).

⁵⁵⁴ 'Pravda Hits US Bid to Block Olympics', (The Current Digest of the Soviet Press, Vol.XXXII, No.11 (16th April 1980), p.7)

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid

The personification frame can be seen here – the boycott campaign was the goal of only 'certain politicians', and a specific part of President Carter's election campaign, designed to hide domestic problems. However, there were also accusations about the campaign framed around human rights abuses -

*'...whole countries, governments and individual athletes are being subjected to crude pressure and blackmail. Wholesale threats are being made that passports for travel to the USSR will not be issued, leaves will be cancelled for those with jobs, and Olympic team members and coaches will not be allowed to go abroad. That's human rights and liberties for you! That's what the US administration's profuse talk about civil rights is really worth!'*⁵⁵⁷

Listeners were reminded that 'in their dirty game, official spokesmen for the White House... do not shrink from outright lies'.⁵⁵⁸ Any suggestion that the US allies may join the boycott campaign was explained away by the 'notorious "Atlantic solidarity"'.⁵⁵⁹ However, whether framed by lies, domestic unrest, electioneering, or Cold War politics, the ultimate point Radio Moscow wanted listeners to understand was -

*'Washington's pressure is leading to a result opposite from the one the White House intended – it is strengthening the resolve of the sports community the world over to uphold the independence of the Olympic movement and its humane ideas.'*⁵⁶⁰

The boycott was being reported as a failure, even though President Carter's announcement had just stepped it up a gear.

7.4 EUROPE VOTES NO!

The day after President Carter told US athletes they would not be going to Moscow, government and sporting officials from Europe met to discuss their own course of action. The first was a meeting in Strasbourg, on the 20th-21st March, of West European Sports Ministers. The second, on 22nd March, was a meeting of West European National Olympic Committee

⁵⁵⁷ 'Pravda Hits US Bid to Block Olympics', (*The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol.XXXII, No.11 (16th April 1980), p.7)

⁵⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid

members in Brussels, also attended by the United States Olympic Committee.⁵⁶¹ On the same day in Latin America, Sports Ministers for that region also met in Mexico City, although this was not reported via any of the broadcasts this thesis examines. Radio Moscow reported the outcome of the West European ministerial meet quite clearly – Home Service listeners were informed at 0700GMT on 21st March that,

*'...the overwhelming majority of sports ministers from 21 countries of Western Europe has refused to support the American idea of boycotting the Olympic Games in Moscow. Only the British and Dutch Ministers voted in favour.'*⁵⁶²

Listeners to the Britain & Ireland service also heard that '18 participants out of 21 rejected the idea of boycott'.⁵⁶³ On 20th March Radio Moscow's French for Europe service reported that,

*'France is against a discussion of the American idea of a boycott... at a conference of European Sports Ministers which opened in Strasbourg today.'*⁵⁶⁴

No further references to this meeting seem to have been broadcast – it is as if outside the Soviet Union, with the exception of Britain and France, the meeting was not deemed worth reporting, despite it seemingly highlighting a split between Europe and the United States. *The Times* did report, albeit briefly, on this meeting, under the title 'Europe falters on boycott' – so perhaps as a media event per se it was not deemed newsworthy.⁵⁶⁵ However, this report conflicts with that of Radio Moscow -

*'Only Britain, Holland and Portugal voiced support for a boycott of the Moscow Olympics... Sweden, Switzerland, Austria and Cyprus took a strictly neutral line, saying they would leave the decision to their national Olympic committees and not try to influence them... The other 14 member states also say the decision is up to their Olympic committees, but they have not decided whether they will influence them for or against a boycott.'*⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶¹ As reported to President Carter by Lloyd Cutler, "Lloyd Cutler Memo on State of Boycott (may Lose the British) 20th March 1980," accessed September 12, 2013, <http://www.margarethatcher.org/document/110484>. subject 'Olympics', p.5

⁵⁶² IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 21st March 1980, 0700, p.2

⁵⁶³ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 25th March 1980, 2000, Section 1.6

⁵⁶⁴ IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 20th March 1980, 1930

⁵⁶⁵ *The Times*, 22nd March 1980, p.4, column A, 'Europe Falters on the Boycott'.

⁵⁶⁶ Ibid

So what Radio Moscow reported to Soviet listeners as an overwhelming majority refusing to boycott was, according to *The Times*, an overwhelming bout of indecision. Thus without the manipulation that appeared in the Home service broadcast, it did not support any of the frames Radio Moscow used to report the boycott as failing.

More widespread was reporting of the 22nd March Brussels meeting of the West European and United States National Olympic Committees. Radio Moscow reported that, as with this example from the Finnish broadcast, 'the National Olympic Committees of 15 West European states say they will do everything to enable the athletes of these countries to take part in the Moscow Olympics.'⁵⁶⁷ This appeared in broadcasts across Europe, with the exception of Britain & Ireland.⁵⁶⁸ In Europe, where there was a lot of indecision, reporting this meeting as anti-boycott, and embattled as well, was perhaps a way of trying to push debate more toward the anti-boycott side of the agenda. The British Olympic Association vote three days later provided a further opportunity to do this.

7.5 THE BOA VOTES TO ATTEND!

Lloyd Cutler (White House Counsel) sent a memorandum to President Carter on 20th March stating that,

'The British Government realises if the BOC [BOA] decides next week to go to Moscow, the effect on the Government's prestige at home and abroad will be disastrous. Even worse, the other West European Governments and NOCs may say that this makes an effective boycott impossible, and make this an excuse for going to Moscow themselves.'⁵⁶⁹

Europe may have dithered, but, on 25th March, Cutler's memo came true. The British Olympic Association voted against British government calls to boycott and allowed individual athletes and teams to make their own decisions. This led to substantial Radio Moscow coverage.

⁵⁶⁷ IWM/SU/E/RM Finn 23rd March 1980, 1630, Section 1.6

⁵⁶⁸ For example, IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 25th March 1980, 1730, Section 2.4; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 25th March 1980, 1730, Section 2.4; RM Greek 25th March 1980, 1900, Section 2e; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Serb 23rd March 1980, 1730, Section 1.6; RM Polish 23rd March 1980, 1500, Section 1.3. Unfortunately, this thesis did not have access to the direct transcription that many of these broadcasts refer to, a commentary by Mikhail Dabrov, as the original translation referenced is from Deutsche Welle.

⁵⁶⁹ "Lloyd Cutler Memo on State of Boycott (may Lose the British) 20th March 1980." subject 'Olympics', p.2

Radio Moscow reported the BOA announcement immediately. The vote was on 25th March and by 2000 GMT that evening, listeners to the Britain & Ireland service were being informed that,

*'The British Olympic Association has decided to send a national team... the decision conflicts with the stand assumed by the Thatcher Government which is supporting the United States Administrations attempts at boycotting the Moscow Olympics.'*⁵⁷⁰

Adding to the localised rejection of the boycott, Britain & Ireland service listeners were at this point first informed about the European Sports meeting, and how 18 of the 21 participants also 'rejected' it.⁵⁷¹

Home service listeners were informed in a commentary on the 23rd that the BOA decision '...is almost sure to give the British government a slap in the face...', this was duly reported briefly on the 25th March and then in more detail on the 26th.⁵⁷² Listeners were told that the BOA 'took the decision to accept without delay... a decision taken in the teeth of the pressure exerted by Thatcher'.⁵⁷³ Another domestic broadcast claimed Denis Follows (BOA chairman) also 'rejected attempts to organise so-called parallel games' and, bringing some form of political ideology into the debate, 'Denis Howell, a member of the parliamentary leadership of the Labour Party, demanded that the baiting of sportsmen be stopped...'⁵⁷⁴ Howell labelled the Olympic Games an enormous moral dilemma, 'in addition to a military and political dilemma such as the invasion of Afghanistan...', and the wider parliamentary debate concerned the reaction to the Afghanistan invasion, but this was not reported by Radio Moscow.⁵⁷⁵ The Home service reported the campaign in Britain using the divisive frame; it was a battle of the government, specifically Margaret Thatcher, versus the sporting community.

The World Service also reported that the BOA would be in Moscow after government intimidation had failed.⁵⁷⁶ In itself, the word 'intimidate' framed the government calls in Britain in a rather more threatening manner than they were. This report went on to add that despite rumours about media outlets potentially reducing their coverage of the Games, 'the British

⁵⁷⁰ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 25th March 1980, 2000, Section 1.6

⁵⁷¹ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 25th March 1980, 2000, Section 1.6

⁵⁷² IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 23rd March 1980, 0800, International Observers at the Round Table, part 3, p.7; IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 25th March 1980, 2200, no.19; RM Home 26th March 1980, 1745, no.13; RM Home 26th March 1980, 1750, no.17.

⁵⁷³ IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 26th March 1980, 1745, no.13

⁵⁷⁴ IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 26th March 1980, 1750, no.17

⁵⁷⁵ *Hansard* 17th March 1980, vol.981, cc31-168, 'Olympic Games', Mr Howell line 148-149

⁵⁷⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 27th March 1980, 2100, Section 2.5

television companies have announced their decision to provide maximum coverage...' – further emphasising how out of touch the government boycott support was.⁵⁷⁷ Elsewhere, the same simple but strong message appeared – the British would be in Moscow despite the personal efforts of Margaret Thatcher.⁵⁷⁸ Despite this being a more definitive outcome against the boycott than the meeting of the European sports ministers, there do not appear to have been any references to it in broadcasts to Eastern Europe.

These reports suggested the situation in Britain was over, Thatcher's pro-boycott campaign had lost. However, by 26th March British & Irish listeners were being told the fight was not over, as the station personified the campaign in Britain further – '...the anti-Olympic marathon, in which Margaret Thatcher is the leader, has not finished yet.'⁵⁷⁹ Valeriy Belyanskiy, the Radio Moscow observer, reported that a government representative had claimed the BOA decision 'does not mean that this is the end of the matter.'⁵⁸⁰ So instead of joining in the somewhat celebratory frame presented elsewhere, the commentary took a rather more sinister approach. For the British government –

*'...punitive measures remain the only ones in the arsenal... What makes the Government of a country with such Olympic will and determination to undertake anti-Olympic actions, even if in this case they had to violate democratic rights and freedoms of their own citizens... One should rather come to a...conclusion, namely that Margaret Thatcher in her anti-Olympic distance Marathon speaks on behalf of the White House. After all, it is there that the idea of boycott of the Moscow Olympics originated.'*⁵⁸¹

Radio Moscow appeared to be prolonging the campaign in Britain, and, using the people harm frame in this instance, further personified the campaign around both Margaret Thatcher and the US Administration. The Soviet broadcaster had the opportunity to use the BOA vote as comprehensive proof that the boycott campaign had failed in Britain; instead it chose to suggest the campaign was very much alive and relying on further repressive measures to be instigated by the British government. It seems that showing the boycott campaign as failing was not always the main motivation for Radio Moscow.

⁵⁷⁷ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 27th March 1980, 2100, Section 2.5

⁵⁷⁸ Variants appeared on IWM/SU/E/ RM Swedish 26th March 1980, 1900, Section 1.5; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 26th March 1980, 1730, Section 1; IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Asia 31st March 1980, 1400, Section 1.10; RM N.Am 25th March 1980, 2300, Section 1.6

⁵⁷⁹ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 26th March 1980, 2000, Section 2

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid

⁵⁸¹ Ibid

7.6 AFGHANISTAN

7.6.1 Afghanistan and the Olympic Boycott

Via all the broadcast regions examined in this research, between 18th March and 5th April there were only four references directly linking Afghanistan with the boycott – Soviet media was successfully separating the two. Reporting of the British House of Commons debate on 17th March, which condemned the invasion whilst recommending a boycott, and the broadcasts surrounding Carter's meeting with US athletes, which also explained the boycott by widely condemning the invasion, did not mention Afghanistan.

There were occasionally broadcasts via the North American, Britain & Ireland and Home services that linked Afghanistan and the boycott. However, these emphasised that the link was in the minds of President Carter, Margaret Thatcher, and their anti-Olympic allies – the link was mentioned so it could be dismissed.

Home service listeners heard that,

'...the strategic design by imperialist reaction to wreck the Moscow Olympics had been formed long before the Afghan events. As far back as several years ago prominent US observers calculated that there would be such a turn of events'.⁵⁸²

Debate over the Games had existed for many years, related to Soviet human rights abuses and even political ideology, so there was a basis for trying to remove Afghanistan as the reason for the boycott by using an historical frame. However, using these examples from the past to frame the boycott campaign as 'the strategic design by imperialist reaction' was perhaps an over elaboration. It was more than just MPs and government officials who had called for a boycott before the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Amongst the Foreign Office files stored at The National Archives can be found letters from a Reverend and from the Women's Campaign for Soviet Jewry – neither of whom wrote letters that appeared to have imperialist motives.⁵⁸³ The same report also used the domestic issues frame to discuss the boycott – 'as the US Presidential elections approach, the fate of the 1980 Olympics will undoubtedly be used by the most reactionary forces in the struggle for the White House'.⁵⁸⁴ So listeners were informed that Afghanistan was a pretext, and not only were the Olympic Games being used in the great US

⁵⁸² IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 19th March 1980, 0400, 'Olympic Saboteurs'

⁵⁸³ TNA/FCO/28/3546/47-34 (not all pages numbered)

⁵⁸⁴ IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 19th March 1980, 0400, 'Olympic Saboteurs'

domestic game of electoral politics, disruption of the Games had been a long term US Administration plan.

British and Irish listeners were informed that one Conservative spokesman had said Britain should boycott 'because what was at stake in Afghanistan were Western values'.⁵⁸⁵ These values were then questioned by the commentator, who suggested the Western values at stake in Afghanistan were relevant to the CIA and Pentagon, and that actually 'the people of the socialist world might have their own set of values...'.⁵⁸⁶ More importantly, '...as far as the events in Afghanistan are concerned, the most relevant Soviet value is...an unflinching loyalty to treaty obligations and a responsiveness to a neighbour's call for help.'⁵⁸⁷ Not only was the emphasis on the CIA and Pentagon re-emphasising the subversion frame, but this report was reasserting the assistance frame by praising the Soviet assistance under international law and bilateral treaty obligations.

When Afghanistan and the boycott were mentioned in the same report via North American broadcasts, discussion of the 1980 Presidential election also appeared. A broadcast on 29th March talked of the 'growing movement in the United States to dump Carter's boycott of the Moscow Olympics', and also 'this is an election year in the United States and every columnist has noted that Carter hopes to get some political mileage out of his boycott.'⁵⁸⁸ Election year politics was a prominent frame throughout the boycott campaign, and here it was reintroduced yet again. What is more, 'Afghanistan, when facts are looked at, provides no reason whatever to put up barricades'.⁵⁸⁹ Radio Moscow reported Afghanistan was being used as an unfeasible pretext for a boycott.

No other stations appear to have set out to discuss how Afghanistan related to the Olympic boycott at this time. That was not for lack of opportunity however. The Olympic Games and the Soviet actions in Afghanistan appeared regularly in news coverage, but extremely rarely in relation to one another. In both the British government vote that called for a boycott, and the speech to athletes by President Carter announcing a boycott, Afghanistan was crucial. Yet Radio Moscow chose to ignore the Afghanistan parts, concentrating instead on the Olympic aspects. It

⁵⁸⁵ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 24th March 1980, 2000, Section 4 'Vantage Point'

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸⁸ IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 29th March 1980, 2300, Section 8, p.11

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid

was a clear example of the attempt that was made to separate Afghanistan from the Olympic Games whilst playing down both issues.

7.6.2 Defending Soviet Actions in Afghanistan

To promote the improvements since the Karmal regime was introduced, on the 19th and 20th March Radio Moscow claimed that over 300 prisoners had been released from Afghan prisons, whilst those seeking refuge from the Amin regime abroad were now free to come back. Home service listeners were informed that,

*'The Afghan authorities have released over 300 people who were detained in February for taking part in disorders in the capital which were provoked by foreign agents. The total number of people so far released thus reaches 1400.'*⁵⁹⁰

This report went on to inform listeners that the situation in Afghanistan was beginning to improve, and the Afghan army, 'with the help of the Soviet military contingent' was safeguarding security against the 'hired gangs of saboteurs' from Pakistan engaged in killing, plundering farms and destroying livestock.⁵⁹¹ This was similar to the 'normalisation' frame that appeared around the time of the uprising in February. That foreign agents provoked the disorders was made clear, but equally the damage was causing harm to the Afghan people, not the Soviet soldier. Interestingly, the report was another example of the Soviet military contingent being portrayed in a secondary role, 'helping' the Afghan army, thus presenting the intervention as friendly assistance and continuing to push the idea that Soviet troops were not in the vanguard.

This level of detail was lacking elsewhere. BBC Monitoring recorded that English language listeners around the world, excluding Britain and North America, were informed that 'Radio Kabul reports release of over 300 people detained in February for taking part in Kabul disturbances'.⁵⁹² This is an interesting report to consider, as it does appear to have been broadcast in different areas of the world, even with the connotations of disruption, reminding

⁵⁹⁰ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 19th March 1980, 1745, International Diary, Section 3.

⁵⁹¹ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 19th March 1980, 1745, International Diary, Section 3, p.2

⁵⁹² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 19th March 1980, 1600, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Africa 19th March 1980, 1700, Section 1.3; RM Eng Asia 19th March 1980, 1400, Section 1.5 – The Monitoring reports do not quote this precisely, but it would appear that the same report was repeated over the English language stations.

listeners of the problems in February.⁵⁹³ However, as with the reports of the Kabul uprising, the whole situation was reported in an 'after the event' manner, acknowledging there was disruption, but producing a report employing the Afghan control frame to show the government was strong enough to feel able to release political prisoners.

This story was not reported in the direct broadcasts to North America or Great Britain & Ireland. At first, this may seem surprising, as the reports showed a system of law and order at work in Afghanistan. Yet Radio Moscow did not report the uprising in February to either region, so it makes sense that they did not report any follow on reports – even ones that could easily be framed to show the Soviet assistance positively. Previous reporting of the uprising to North American and British & Irish listeners had concentrated on personifying Amin as the cause of Afghan problems. This time, reporting was about an amnesty for Afghans who had fled abroad from the Amin regime.⁵⁹⁴ Rather than report about people who had been jailed because of uprising against the new regime, Radio Moscow reported on people trying to come home because the previous bad regime had gone. This was a report that only appeared elsewhere on the English World Service broadcast.⁵⁹⁵ It clearly implied a change of circumstance for many in Afghanistan, and fitted with the normalisation frame as it suggested the country was improving, something that the release of the prisoners held due to the recent uprising may not have achieved to the same degree.

These were not the only news reports that attempted to put across the idea of Afghan society improving in recent months though. Each new story seemed to be designed to frame relations between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan government and people positively, and to highlight how the situation in Afghanistan was constantly improving. Radio Moscow reported how Soviet-Afghan relations had improved, schooling in Afghanistan had improved, how the government, and Soviet soldiers, were helping Afghan peasants with their crops, Afghans were showing support for their new government, and of course how useful the 'disinterested' assistance by the Soviet Union had been.⁵⁹⁶ Babrak Karmal was even quoted via the North

⁵⁹³ For example: IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 19th March 1980, 1730, 1.4; IWM/SU/E/RM Finnish 19th March 1980, 1630, 1.4; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Swedish 19th March 1980, 1900, 1.2

⁵⁹⁴ IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 19th March 1980, 2300, 1.4; RM GBI 19th March 1980, 2000, 1.4

⁵⁹⁵ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 20th March 1980, 0700, section 1.3

⁵⁹⁶ Some examples: **Soviet-Afghan relations** – IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 21st March 1980, 1745; IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 2nd April 1980, 0200; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 21st March 1980, 2100; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th March 1980, 1500; IWM/SU/C/218 RM N.Am 2nd April 1980; RM Eng Asia 3rd April 1980; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 20th March 1980; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Spain 20th March 1980.

American, Britain & Ireland, Home and Arabic services, speaking of the friendship with the USSR being 'an expression of the freewill of the Afghan people', and, 'traditional'.⁵⁹⁷ The clear purpose was to frame reports about Afghanistan as favourable toward the Soviet Union and every opportunity seems to have been used to show how Afghanistan had improved since the Soviet assistance in December 1979. Soviet assistance had helped the state get back to normality – something Radio Moscow may have wanted to make clear to audiences worldwide in case they also needed assistance.

7.6.3 *Attacking the US-led interference*

There were daily reports about western lies, about arms heading into Afghanistan, about United States policy – quite often these reports were preceded by or followed reports on the good the Soviet Union was doing. For example, throughout 21st March, the Home service not only informed listeners about Afghan-Soviet friendship, Afghanistan's desire for good relations with nearby states, and letters from listeners supporting Soviet aid; but it also informed listeners about US arms to Afghanistan, the undeclared war in Afghanistan, and the claim that US President Carter's foreign policies were being perceived negatively on the world stage.⁵⁹⁸ There was a clear framing of the good Soviet assistance contrasted with the bad US-led insurgency, and the reasons for it, in Afghanistan at this time.

The US-Chinese relationship was a significant factor in Radio Moscow's attempts to frame the situation in Afghanistan during this time. North American listeners were told the new Indian President Indira Gandhi had denounced, in a newspaper interview, US and Chinese weapons

Afghan education – IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 23rd March 1980, 1200; IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 1st April 1980, 1400; IWM/SU/C/218 RM Eng Asia 2nd April 1980.

Afghan farming and peasant help – IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 25th March 1980, 2100; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 19th March 1980.

Afghan support for government – IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 28th March 1980, 0500; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st March 1980, 0700; IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 27th March 1980; RM GBI 6th April 1980; IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 30th March 1980; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Port Europe 30th March 1980.

Soviet assistance – IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st March 1980, 1300; IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 21st March 1980, 2300, 1.3; RM GBI 26 March; IWM/SU/D/213 RM Fre Europe 30th March 1980; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Swedish 2nd April 1980.

⁵⁹⁷ IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 21st March 1980, 2300, 1.3; RM GBI 21 March 2000, 1.1; IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 21st March 1980, 1745, International Diary, section 1; IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 21st March 1980, 2100, 1.6.

⁵⁹⁸ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 21st March 1980, 1745, International Diary, section 1; 1900, section 13; 1400, section 5; 2045, Event and Opinion; 1600, section 6 'Correspondent Leonid Rassadin'; 0100, section 8.

deliveries to Pakistan.⁵⁹⁹ World Service listeners were told 'observers' of Chinese military delegations in Pakistan were working on a new phase of the 'joint anti-Afghan strategy worked out by Washington and Peking to deliver American weapons to Pakistan through China, to conceal the US involvement in supplying arms for the mercenaries infiltrated in Afghanistan'.⁶⁰⁰ British and Irish listeners were told that the Delhi Conference for peace and security 'condemned [the] US and China for campaigning against Afghanistan and censured US growing military might in the Persian Gulf area'.⁶⁰¹ Previous emphasis had been placed on the US as being instigator-in-chief of world tension, but here it can be seen that the Soviet Union also portrayed the Chinese as a threat to world peace – and this time it was not just to Asian listeners, but to listeners worldwide.

The Home service told listeners that 'Washington and Peking see it in terms of escalating the anti-Afghan campaign and extending subversive activity against Afghanistan'.⁶⁰² The only mention of outside opinion was a comment about US-Chinese discussion of the 'so-called Afghan question', made by *Reuters*.⁶⁰³ Additionally, all these reports via the Radio Moscow network used the subversion frame to suggest the insurgents were fighting Afghanistan, the government and the people, rather than fighting the Moscow-installed leadership and its Soviet military help.

Again, instead of discussing the fighting within Afghanistan, Radio Moscow focused on the surrounding situation. There was nothing specific about what effect these arms movements were having within Afghanistan, what Radio Moscow wanted to tell its listeners, all over the world, was where these armaments were coming from.

That these arms were making their way to Afghanistan through Pakistan was something Radio Moscow was keen to report. Along with the World Service, the Home service listeners were informed that,

'In the countries of Asia – and not only there – ever greater concern is being provoked by Washington's attempts to turn Pakistan into an obedient tool of its policies... Having suffered defeat in Iran, American imperialism has gone over to practical implementation of a long-pondered plan for the creation of a broad military bridgehead in the Near East

⁵⁹⁹ IWM/SU/C/217 RM N.Am 19th March 1980, 2300, 1.7

⁶⁰⁰ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 20th March 1980, 1600, 1.5

⁶⁰¹ IWM/SU/C/217 RM GBI 25th March 1980, 2000

⁶⁰² IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 19th March 1980, 1745, section 4.

⁶⁰³ Ibid

*and South-west Asia... Pakistan has begun to assume a key significance in the plans directed against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.*⁶⁰⁴

Asian audiences were informed regularly about Pakistan being used as the US bridgehead into Afghanistan. On 20th March, English language Asian service listeners were told about the intensification of US and Chinese arms movements into Pakistan – 'where mercenaries infiltrated into Afghanistan are trained and armed'.⁶⁰⁵ On 22nd March, it was announced that,

*'...what Japan is now doing, freezing economic aid to Afghanistan and giving more assistance to Pakistan, whose territory is being used for intervention in Afghanistan, is clearly leading to more tensions in that part of Asia.'*⁶⁰⁶

There was a clear pattern – on 23rd March, listeners were informed about Chinese subversion in Afghanistan, again via Pakistan, and on 26th March, Radio Moscow reported *Pravda* claims about Washington's attempts to draw Pakistan into its aggressive policy in Asia.⁶⁰⁷ This pattern of reporting Afghanistan did not stop – there were further reports at this time about US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance evading questions over arms to Pakistan, and regular reporting of Pakistan's involvement in Afghan subversion.⁶⁰⁸

Radio Moscow was clearly trying to instigate Pakistan in the events in Afghanistan, to the extent that it could be argued they were using the country as some sort of regional enemy. The United States was pulling the strings, and Pakistan was portrayed as the local puppet state within the wider frame of American imperialism. In broadcasts to Asian listeners, Pakistan was being used by the US and China as a bridgehead into Afghanistan.

The reports that listeners may have heard elsewhere were not just linked to schemes by the United States and its allies though. Radio Moscow was keen on occasion to link the current events in Afghanistan to events long in the past. The subversion in Afghanistan was claimed to be part of a wider and more on-going plot linked right back to the Western reaction to the Bolshevik revolution in 1917. In a review of a British book, '*When Britain invaded Soviet Russia*', Soviet listeners were informed by the reviewer that –

⁶⁰⁴ IWM/SU/B/527 RM Home 25th March 1980, 2100, Section 6

⁶⁰⁵ IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Asia 20th March 1980, 1400, 1.5

⁶⁰⁶ IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Asia 22nd March 1980, 1400, 1.2, p.3

⁶⁰⁷ IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Asia 23rd March 1980, 1400 1.7; RM Eng Asia 26th March 1980, 1400, Section 2.2

⁶⁰⁸ IWM/SU/C/218 RM Eng Asia 3rd April 1980, 1400; IWM/SU/C/217 RM Eng Asia 29th March 1980, 1400, 1.9; RM Eng Asia 31st March 1980, 1400, 1.6

*'When you look back the more than six decades that have elapsed since the British intervention in the north of Russia... you can see how the hysterics at the at time about the red danger and the present-day anti-Soviet concoctions in the press are in tune, how similar in its near-sightedness and its die-hardness the anti-Sovietism of the British ruling clique in 1918 and 1980.'*⁶⁰⁹

This was a rare instance of the insurgency in Afghanistan being linked to anti-Sovietism, as opposed to being anti-Afghan. Yet it fits with the frames used to report the events in and around Afghanistan. It implied a government and media conspiracy, leaving out any criticism of the ordinary person. Again, the anti-Soviet actions were placed within an historical frame, to distance them from Afghanistan, and this history was something Radio Moscow was trying hard to emphasise – they may have reiterated the Soviet defence of the invasion through a treaty of friendship, but they were keen to show that the problems in Afghanistan went back further than December 1979. Reporting the release of prisoners, or the returning home of those who had fled the old regime, was an attempt to show not only that the foreign support for the insurgents was failing, but that Afghanistan was improving to a level higher than anytime previously.

7.7 SUMMARY

With the exception of the release of over 300 prisoners from Kabul prisons, the key moments covered in this chapter were almost exclusively boycott focused. The reporting on Afghanistan remained consistent and followed the pattern of previous months; in amongst the attacks on the US and China, there was an increased emphasis on how Afghanistan was 'normalising'. However, the announcements surrounding the boycott shifted the debate over the Moscow Games from merely words to actions, making this a significant moment for Soviet reporting.

The key to the reporting at this point was the desire to split the reaction, the boycott, from the cause, the invasion. Afghanistan was integral to the House of Commons vote, as it was to President Carter's decree over the US Olympic team, yet Radio Moscow told audiences worldwide about various other factors they claimed contributed to the pro-boycott statements instead – they did not associate the boycott calls with the invasion of Afghanistan. With coverage of each announcement there was a clear attempt to continue to frame the boycott as the pet project of Jimmy Carter and Margaret Thatcher – they were often attributed with pro-boycott comments, everyone else, sports officials, the general public, and other politicians, were

⁶⁰⁹ IWM/SU/B/526 RM Home 4th April 1980, 0330, 'Pravda Review'.

attributed with comments supporting the Olympics. The boycott was being forced through predominantly by President Carter, against the will of the world – when a leader was said to be pro-boycott, the people were described as being against it. However, the broadcaster also presented the boycott as dividing the US from its Western European allies – the European vote was highlighted, accurately or not, as justification of how bad the boycott campaign was for US international relations.

There was increased localisation in the broadcasts attacking the boycott campaign as Radio Moscow began to reference local athletes and local groups. Evidently, just presenting a worldwide rejection was not enough anymore, as the boycott campaign gathered momentum; Radio Moscow felt the need to present the anti-boycott campaign as increasingly local. However, whilst it continued to present the boycott campaign as failing, it was not always the case that the broadcaster wanted to present the boycott campaign as dying. It may not be a surprise that President Carter's 'Ours will not go' speech was not broadcast as a definitive announcement confirming the boycott. However, that the British Olympic Association announcement, defying the British Parliament boycott-supporting vote, was not treated as definitive raises questions about the motives of Radio Moscow at this time. Radio Moscow wanted to continue to portray Margaret Thatcher as acting against the British people – for her government to be seen to accept the will of the BOA would not suit this claim. Equally, the boycott campaign was certainly distracting from the invasion of Afghanistan, and perhaps these were the reasons behind reporting the campaign in Britain was far from over. The divisiveness of the boycott campaign also provided Radio Moscow with the opportunity to frame the situation as government versus people, to build upon the personification of Margaret Thatcher and her 'anti-Soviet political sideshow'. Had Radio Moscow accepted the British team would be going and the US team would not be, they would have been left to discuss the other important international issue at this time – Afghanistan.

CHAPTER 8

DEADLINE DAY

This chapter examines how Radio Moscow reported news about the Olympic Games in the days surrounding the 24th May 1980 – the deadline for national Olympic committees (NOCs) to accept or decline the invitation from the Moscow Olympic Organising Committee to attend the Games. In many states there had been no firm acceptance or rejection, many governments and Olympic committees were waiting to see what others did before committing either way. Deadline day forced their hand. After 24th May a more complete picture of the scale of the boycott, or at least those states not attending for various reasons, became clear – although the full scale of the boycott and the sporting reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan would not become completely clear until the opening ceremony of the Games themselves, when many teams either marched under the Olympic banner in protest at the Soviet actions or did not appear in the parade. However, it became clear after deadline day that there would be a boycott, and it would be significant. Before this Radio Moscow had argued the boycott would be a failure, based on the number of acceptances it claimed the Soviet organising committee had received. Deadline day was a turning point for this argument, there was conclusive evidence that the boycott would be major, based on the number of non-acceptances. How Radio Moscow framed this change is the focus of this chapter.

The broadcasts examined cover the dates from 17th May to 3rd June 1980. The first section of the chapter will examine the Olympic deadline, as this had the most resonance for how Radio Moscow framed the boycott campaign. The second section will explore reports of the developments surrounding Afghanistan at this time. The Afghan government itself put forward peace proposals and the 11th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers met in Pakistan, from 17th-22nd May 1980, once more condemning the Soviet actions in Afghanistan, additionally proposing to set up a commission to investigate the invasion. Radio Moscow made its opinions of each of these known, fitting them into pre-existing frames. The Soviet military sweeps of Ghanzi and the Kunar valley, and other military actions that would not have fitted well with claims that Soviet troops were not involved in the fighting, did not make it onto the airwaves.⁶¹⁰ Radio Moscow continued to tell listeners about Afghanistan, but it was undoubtedly selective in what was reported.

⁶¹⁰ M. Grau, L. & Gress, *The Soviet Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost* (University Press of Kansas, 2002). p.30-31

8.1 HOW DEADLINE DAY AFFECTED THE FRAMING OF THE BOYCOTT CAMPAIGN

This section will investigate how the reporting of the states attending the Games changed after the deadline passed, comparing how the boycott campaign was portrayed before and after the announcement, and considering whether the states Radio Moscow chose to criticise changed. It is divided into two sections, the first analyses the broadcasts made by Radio Moscow in the period 17th-24th May 1980, before the announcement about attendees was made by the IOC. The second section looks at the reporting after the announcement, from 25th May to 3rd June 1980.

8.1.1 *Building up to Deadline Day*

In the days before the impending deadline, Radio Moscow continued to frame reporting to portray the boycott campaign as failing. Following on from previous months, the broadcaster continued to use the quantity frame, naming states it claimed had agreed to attend, or rather those it claimed had rejected President Carter's boycott call. Home service listeners were told on 20th May that the Italian, Austrian, Belgian, Dutch, Danish, Icelandic, Irish, Swedish, Congolese and Botswanan Olympic Committees would be taking part.⁶¹¹ This was reinforced on 21st May, with commentary claiming that, '*Reuters* reports a growing list of European countries which will send teams to Olympics'.⁶¹² On the day of the deadline, the Home service was still reporting the teams attending – for example, states such as Costa-Rica, Nicaragua, Uganda, Panama, Venezuela and Nepal.⁶¹³

North American listeners were told much the same – except this time the countries listed were Spain, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Angola and Cameroon.⁶¹⁴ Soviet listeners may have gained the impression from their list that almost the whole of Europe would be attending, North American listeners that the Americas, with the exception of the USA, would be in strong attendance. There was localisation in reporting of the boycott rejections, with some additional states listed from further afield to support Radio Moscow claims that it was not only a local rejection, but an international rejection.

Portraying the boycott in this manner was not restricted to North America and the Soviet Union – seemingly every regional broadcast held some reference to more states, particularly ones local

⁶¹¹ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 20th May 1980, 1755, no.2

⁶¹² IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 21st May 1980, 0304, no.17

⁶¹³ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 24th May 1980, 1400, section 8.g

⁶¹⁴ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 23rd May 1980, 2300, no.6

to the listener, agreeing to attend. For example, African listeners, to both the French and English regional broadcasts, heard about the actions of individual states and even the specific teams attending – again though, this localisation was mixed with international rejection. While French language listeners were told about the planned participation of the Ghanaian, Algerian and Zambian football teams, English language listeners heard how the national Olympic committees of ‘Australia, Denmark, Luxembourg, Spain, Guatemala and the UAA [sic]’ had said they would send a team.⁶¹⁵

A slightly different way of reporting the acceptances appears to have been placed on Western Europe. Instead of informing listeners about states both local and worldwide, listeners to European broadcasts were informed primarily about European states. More so than for any other region, it appears localisation was particularly important for Radio Moscow when telling European listeners that their neighbours were attending. The announcement that the Italians were intending to go to the Games was publicised in broadcasts to France, Portugal and, of course, Italy.⁶¹⁶ Swedish and Finnish language listeners were told that the Swedish, Finnish and Yugoslavian teams had been announced.⁶¹⁷ Listeners to the Britain & Ireland service were told about Austrian and Swedish attendance alongside that of Irish attendance – the latter a report not only praising the Irish Olympic committee for going against the boycott, but rebuking the Irish government for withdrawing financial support, in the region of \$184,000, from the Olympic committee because they refused to boycott.⁶¹⁸ Additionally, the ‘Tory government of Margaret Thatcher’ (again personifying the boycott) had also refused financial aid to the British Olympic Association – however, with the apparent help of £650,000 raised from public donations, this would not stop as many as 340 athletes going to Moscow, which according to a claim made by BOA Chairman Denis Follows cited by Radio Moscow was ‘...more than was planned’.⁶¹⁹ This was a reinforcement of the divisive frame, showing not only that the Irish and British committees/associations had gone against their governments wishes, but that the public had helped support the Games by supplying money when the government refused.

⁶¹⁵ IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Afr 20th May 1980, 1700, section 5; IWM/SU/C/219 RM Eng Afr 23rd May 1980, 1700, section 1.11

⁶¹⁶ IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Eur 20th May 1980, 1830, section 1.9; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Port Eur 20th May 1980, 1930, section 1.10; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 21st May 1980, section 2.5.

⁶¹⁷ IWM/SU/D/214 RM Swedish 22nd May 1980, 1900, section 1.7; IWM/SU/E/ RM Finnish 22nd May 1980, 1630, section 1.13

⁶¹⁸ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 19th May 1980, 2000, section 1.7, and, 22nd May 1980, 2000, section 4.

⁶¹⁹ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 22nd May 1980, 2000, section 4.

Foreshadowing the frames used to report the boycott campaign after the deadline day had passed, the same commentary to Britain & Ireland on 22nd May also claimed that,

*'Of course it's regrettable that the United States, West Germany and Canada will not take part in the Moscow Olympics, but their absence will not make the Games less significant...the Americans have lost the lead in world sports. In Montreal they were only third in the number of medals won, while the Canadians did not win a single gold...'*⁶²⁰

Despite the on-going lists of attendees and the massive numbers claimed for British athletes in particular, this statement about the US and Canadian teams, implying weakness, was part of a subtle frame shift beginning at this point. Whilst Radio Moscow was still making statements about quantity, for example over 102 states attending or more than 340 athletes in one team, reporting of the boycott began to use a frame concentrating on the quality of the athletes who would be in Moscow – those who were not turning up would not be missed because they lacked quality.⁶²¹ This was the first time Radio Moscow had used a frame that was specifically sports focused. It can also be seen as the turning point, the realisation that the boycott was going to hit, and hit hard.

Continuing the European focused nature of European broadcasts on the Games, French listeners were told that 'seven more Western European national Olympic committees have confirmed' their attendance.⁶²² In a Cold War political sense, and even in an Olympic sporting sense, it was clear that the Soviet Union continued to try to present Europe as not following the US lead – the US decision was divisive and isolating. This was a point specifically made to Radio Moscow's Italian listeners after their Olympic committee had defied their government –

*'...the ill-famed Atlantic solidarity which is demanded by Washington every time it wants to intensify the situation in the world and to hit détente... the decision of the Italian National Olympic Committee will serve the cause of consolidation and expansion of international cooperation.'*⁶²³

Moving on to list Western European teams attending, Radio Moscow told Italian listeners –

⁶²⁰ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 22nd May 1980, 2000, section 4. Ibid

⁶²¹ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 23rd May 1980, 2000, p.4, section VII; RM GBI 22nd May 1980, 2000, section 4.

⁶²² IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Eur 20th May 1980, 1730, section 3.6

⁶²³ IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 21st May 1980, 1730, section 2.5

*'...the intention to send athletes to Moscow has already been announced by the national Olympic committees of such west-European countries as Britain, Austria, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Eire, France, Sweden and others. The adherence by the Italian national Olympic committee isolates the United States and the FRG in their attack against the 'sancta sanctorum' of world sport.'*⁶²⁴

Listing states in this manner, rather than saying 'more than eight' was also a technique adopted by Radio Moscow. Not only did it provide specific examples of attending states, but by naming a string of states rather than just a number, the list of attendees sounded longer. The argument put forward here not only used this technique to show how isolated the United States was, it also framed the boycott as an attack on the 'sancta sanctorum' of world sport – not as a reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Whilst the Italian Olympic Committee defied the Italian government, the same cannot be said for the West German Olympic Committee. The Italian resolution appeared across many of the European Radio Moscow airwaves, but the West German boycott of the Olympics only gained the briefest of mentions. What is more, in a similar manner to how reporting of the Islamic Conference meetings came to their anti-Soviet conclusions, the vote to boycott was framed more as an expected outcome due to US pressure rather than because of any true political or West German reason. Soviet listeners were told that the FRG national Olympic committee voted in favour of a boycott by 'a tiny majority of the votes – 51-40...' in a vote on 15th May 1980.⁶²⁵ The actual vote was 59-40, an additional eight favouring a boycott, so it was rather more than a tiny majority, it was almost 50% more.⁶²⁶ However, the commentary broadcast to audiences in the Soviet Union on 21st May 1980, just three days before the deadline, went on to rather accurately portray the outcome of the boycott in Europe, by claiming,

*'...not a single West European country followed the example of West Germany. Even among the NATO member States no more could be found to dance to the US tune... one may conclude that this is a telling blow to the US policy of blackmail and pressure...'*⁶²⁷

This statement is slightly misleading. Canada, Monaco and Norway boycotted the Games, all of which come under the banners of NATO and Western Europe. As each had already boycotted

⁶²⁴ IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 21st May 1980, 1730, section 2.5, p.3

⁶²⁵ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 21st May 1980, 1945, no.1, p.2

⁶²⁶ A. Guttman, *The Olympics A History of the Modern Games* (University of Illinois Press, 2002). p.153

⁶²⁷ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 21st May 1980, 1945, no.1, p.2

by this point, the line ‘no more could be found’ was accurate, albeit misleading. Importantly though, the claim that the boycott was based around US blackmail and pressure, and independent and free thought went against it, was further emphasised here.

Radio Moscow mentioned specific teams or states, whether or not localised to an audience, as part of the wider quantity frame portraying broad participation. For example, British and Irish listeners were told that 102 countries had announced their participation, although ‘in many countries Olympic Committees are acting under exceptional pressure from the US government, but we think that the majority of countries will take part in the Summer Games...’.⁶²⁸ There was perhaps a hint of audience priming here, should the actual number be dramatically lower than 102, listeners could point to exceptional US pressure as the cause. The figure of 102 also appeared elsewhere, both in English language broadcasts to North America and via the World Service, and in broadcasts to other regions of the globe, such as in French to Europe, Italian, Turkish, and Dari.⁶²⁹ This number was less than had been quoted in previous months (for example, in January Radio Moscow had told North American listeners that 120 teams had indicated their participation), but it was still intended to indicate ‘broad participation’.⁶³⁰ Whether Soviet broadcasting considered the numbers involved in previous Olympics is not clear, but throughout the build-up to deadline day the numbers claimed were always significantly higher than those at the 1976 Montreal Olympics (92 – due in part to a boycott by African teams), and roughly comparable to attendance figures from both Munich ’72 (121 NOCs) and Mexico ’68 (112). Through sheer quantity of (claimed) acceptances, the boycott was still being framed as a failure. However, at the same time, listeners were being informed that the IOC Chairman, Lord Killanin, was willing to extend the invitation deadline and accept late applications.⁶³¹

Radio Moscow continued to publish letters from listeners criticising the boycott, the station also continued to frame the boycott around reasons unrelated to Afghanistan, using the analytical frame to relate it to domestic electioneering, or that the US was actively trying to damage the

⁶²⁸ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 23rd May 1980, 2000, p.4, section VII (quoting IWM/SU/E/176 RM Pol 23rd May 1700, p.2, section 4).

⁶²⁹ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 22nd May 1980 2300, p.2, section 13, and, RM WSE 22nd May 1980 2100, p.2 section 10; IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 23rd May 1980 1730, p.2, section 2.5; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 22nd May 1980 2100, section 1.7; IWM/SU/F/ RM Turkish 23rd May 1980 1400, p.3, section 5.4; IWM/SU/F/ RM Dari 23rd May 1980, 1430, section 1.8

⁶³⁰ IWM/SU/C/216 RM N.Am 9th Jan 1980, 2300, 1.13; IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 23rd May 1980, 2000, section. 7.

⁶³¹ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 22nd May 1980, 2300, p.2, section 1.11; IWM SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd May 1980, 1300, 1.8

Olympic movement as a whole.⁶³² The last point was made by Vladimir Promyslov, then Major of Moscow, who the Britain & Ireland service claimed had said, 'the USSR believes the unwillingness of the USA and several of its allies to take part in the Moscow Olympics will damage the Olympic movement'.⁶³³ Rather than mention the reasoning behind the boycott, Radio Moscow was putting forward a claim about the consequences of the boycott. Using the analytical frame, boycott reporting concentrated not, in this instance, on trying to split it from Afghanistan, but on trying to place it within the context of destroying the entire Olympic movement. An interesting parallel here was the Soviet actions in 1968, when they themselves threatened to boycott the Mexico Olympics because of South African involvement. In that instance, it was the IOC, not the Soviet Union, that Soviet sources claimed was splitting the Olympic movement – even though it was the Soviet Union, and many other African states, threatening non-attendance.⁶³⁴ Whilst the two boycotts are only in their broadest sense similar, the Soviet claims about unity and the potential for jeopardy were markedly similar, despite the different position the Soviet Union found itself in for 1980 compared to 1968.⁶³⁵

Splitting the Olympic movement was an argument also broadcast to North American listeners -

*'One of the most serious consequences of [the] US Administration's line is the threat of a possible splitting in the international Olympic movement which would lead to an end to the very spirit of the movement'.*⁶³⁶

This commentary also talked of the US athletes – '...the ones who stand to lose from the boycott'.⁶³⁷ Radio Moscow had claimed the grain embargo would do most damage not to the Soviet Union, but to the American farmer. Now it was claiming the boycott would not harm the Soviet Union but instead the United States athlete, in addition to potentially splitting the Olympic movement. Furthermore, the same commentary incorporated the argument that - 'the whole campaign of boycotting the Olympics is designed above all to serve the interests of Carter's election marathon'.⁶³⁸ Using the word 'marathon' was clearly a play on the Olympic

⁶³² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 20th May 1980, 1100, 2.b; IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 20th May 1980, 2300, section 4; RM GBI 18th May 1980, 2000, section 1.16

⁶³³ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 18th May 1980, 2000, section 1.16

⁶³⁴ *The Times*, 16th April 1968, p.1, column A. 'S. African talks on Olympics',

⁶³⁵ Ibid

⁶³⁶ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 20th May 1980, 2300, p.2, section 4.

⁶³⁷ Ibid

⁶³⁸ Ibid

event, and again, it was all about shifting the listener away from any illusions that the boycott was related to Afghanistan.

Alongside letters condemning the boycott, there were also reports designed to give the impression that well-known sections of the foreign press were also anti-boycott. One example from the Home service began by discussing reports from *The New York Times*, before moving on to give the views of the Soviet commentator.⁶³⁹ Whilst there was no direct quote from *The New York Times* condemning the boycott or the US Administration, just being mentioned in the piece alongside the condemnation was one way Soviet radio used Western reporting when framing its own reports.⁶⁴⁰

In the days before the deadline, Radio Moscow proceeded with many of the frames it had used in the previous months. They were still telling listeners all over the world that the boycott was failing and that Afghanistan was not the real reason behind the campaign. They were also referencing important foreign news sources that they claimed supported the Soviet stance. And to show that the boycott lacked support in other areas of the worldwide population, they were still reading out listeners' letters and quoting athletes and the general public. However, whilst there were lists of states and numbers of attendees stated with great regularity, there was also an increasing emphasis on the boycott pressure placed by the US on other states, the imperialism frame, and the beginnings of a shift away from focusing reporting around the quantity frame. In anticipation of the IOC announcing considerably less states attending than the previous claims made by Radio Moscow, the quality of the athletes was a consideration Radio Moscow was starting to raise more and more.

8.1.2 The Deadline Passes...

Within days of the deadline passing, the IOC reported that 85 Olympic teams had accepted the invitation to attend the Games.⁶⁴¹ As this was a significant reduction from the 102 and 120 the station had previously claimed, it could be anticipated that this would be the point when Radio Moscow would be forced to admit the boycott campaign had had an effect.⁶⁴² However, this did not happen. Initial reports proclaimed this number as proof the boycott had failed, whilst at the

⁶³⁹ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 21st May 1980, 1945, section 1.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid

⁶⁴¹ *The Times*, 28th May 1980, p.1 '29 nations decline invitation to Olympics'

⁶⁴² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 27th May 1980, 1300, section 12; IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 27th May 1980, 1330, 'International Diary', no.4; IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 30th May 1980, 0030, section 5; RM GBI 29th May 1980, 2000, section 4.1.

same time some broadcasts were carrying comments from the IOC claiming the number was ‘satisfactory’.⁶⁴³ This was hardly a ringing endorsement. However, Vladimir Popov, the Radio Moscow commentator, informed British and Irish listeners that,

*‘The general flow of applications... indicates quite clearly that with little exception all major countries will take part in the Games.’*⁶⁴⁴

So rather than frame the boycott in terms of numbers, as had previously been the case, the emphasis seems to have switched to highlighting that most major countries would appear. No longer could Radio Moscow base its arguments on comments, actual figures were now known and out in the open, so the framing of the campaign had to shift. The boycott was still reported as a failure, not now because over 100 countries had agreed to attend, as previously claimed, but because the major countries were still attending. Framing the boycott was about highlighting the quality, not the quantity, of athletes attending.

Moreover, in the same commentary, Popov asserted that the figures claimed by the US Administration were wrong –

*‘They also cite the list of the countries that have not submitted applications and conclude that these countries support the anti-Olympic campaign of the American administration. But let’s turn to the facts. According to IOC spokesmen the majority of these countries have explained their absence at the Olympics by reasons which are far from being political, but are financial, organisational, or stemming from the inadequate form of athletes.’*⁶⁴⁵

There was perhaps a grudging admittance that 85 (or indeed 80 as the IOC website now reports) acceptances was not what the Soviet Union had hoped for.⁶⁴⁶ However, the argument was thrown straight back at the United States, non-attendances were for reasons unrelated to politics (a vague reference to dismissing any link with Afghanistan). This was a new twist on the frames used to split the boycott from Afghanistan. In the months before the deadline, Radio Moscow had claimed the boycotters were unduly pressurised by the United States government, now the claim was put forward that those not attending were in the vast majority of cases not attending because of other matters, they were not actually boycotting.

⁶⁴³ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 27th May 1980, 2000, section 1.10; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 27th May 1980, 2100, section 1.7

⁶⁴⁴ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 29th May 1980, 2000, section 4.1

⁶⁴⁵ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 29th May 1980, 2000, section 4.1

⁶⁴⁶ The IOC website (www.Olympics.org) states there were 80 attending teams.

This way of describing the non-attendees fitted with the argument that the boycott had failed. Radio Moscow claimed that yes, there were fewer teams than the Soviet Union anticipated, but those not attending had their reasons, unrelated to politics, and those attending consisted of the majority of the top teams. Therefore, Radio Moscow claimed that, ‘the results of the count of applications that have been submitted shows that the boycott campaign imposed on the international sports movement... has failed.’⁶⁴⁷

The quality frame was also used in Home service broadcasts –

*‘...the majority of the National Olympic Committees have officially announced that they would be taking part in the Games and that among this... virtually all leading sports countries are represented except for the United States, the German Federal Republic and Japan; that the representatives of all continents of the world will be taking part...’*⁶⁴⁸

The boycott was framed as a failure because, Radio Moscow claimed, it was not worldwide, it included few of the major sporting nations, and it was only supported by a minority. More specifically, the commentary went on to claim,

*‘...the Games in Moscow will not only be of full value as to their quantitative composition... but... also as to the qualitative composition and will indisputably make their great contribution to the development both of amateur sport and of the International Olympic movement’.*⁶⁴⁹

Again, of those who were not attending, ‘only a few... have, under the United States’ diktat, embarked on declaring the political reasons for their non-participation’.⁶⁵⁰ Thus, for Soviet listeners, the effect of the boycott on both quantity and quality was dismissed, with the announcers admitting to ‘a few’ boycotters who had only joined the boycott because of US pressure.⁶⁵¹

The publication of the attendees had dealt the ‘American-led boycott’ a ‘major setback’, according to the World Service.⁶⁵² However, the crux of the argument for those listening to the World Service was thus - ‘The pillars of the boycott, USA, FRG and Japan were not so

⁶⁴⁷ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 29th May 1980, 2000, section 4.1

⁶⁴⁸ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 27th May 1980, 1700, no.2

⁶⁴⁹ Ibid

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid

⁶⁵¹ Ibid

⁶⁵² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th May 1980, 0700, section 2.2, p.3

successful at Montreal. The Moscow Games will be fully-fledged Games, which will promote sport'.⁶⁵³ Hence, World Service listeners were reassured about the quality of the Games, although in a manner that questioned the success and ability of athletes from the foremost boycotting states rather than focusing on the number of attendees. There may have been a boycott, but Radio Moscow was using the quality frame to inform listeners that it would not affect the top athletes. This was also a further reason for the boycott – the US and others were worried about underperforming and thus needed an excuse not to attend. Additionally, in an attempt to discredit information from other sources, the World Service quoted a TASS observer claim that the US State Department had openly falsified the number of countries it claimed to be boycotting the Games.⁶⁵⁴ Not only were the numbers being falsified elsewhere, but the reasons for those who were not attending were also being falsified by others to portray the boycott as more successful than Radio Moscow believed it to be.

Listeners in North America were told that 29 committees had declined to appear at the Games, again, mostly due to non-political reasons.⁶⁵⁵ There was no mention of the further 27 who had not responded to the invitation at all.⁶⁵⁶ Listeners heard the boycott described as a 'pointless campaign', but, interestingly, they also heard the commentator Vladimir Pozner claim that 'Soviet people were aware of the reasons for the boycott...' – these reasons included Afghanistan ('this alleged reason'), 'as well as the real reasons underlying US policy'.⁶⁵⁷ US listeners heard the explanation for these 29 not attending before they were informed that 85 teams would be attending.⁶⁵⁸ However, presenting this relatively small number before admitting the number of actual attendees, Radio Moscow had tried to form in the listeners minds the idea that the boycott had achieved very little. Had they announced 85 teams were attending before anything else, listeners, who may have heard Radio Moscow's previous claims about 120 teams attending, may have considered the boycott something of a success. Reversing the announcements in this manner allowed for a more effective framing of the boycott as a failure as it provided the opportunity to focus the minds of listeners around the reasons for non-attendance, and in doing so highlight how few states, according to Radio Moscow, actually supported the US-led boycott campaign. It was almost as if in doing this Radio Moscow was creating a popularity table, the US boycott having a tiny fraction of the support the Soviet's

⁶⁵³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th May 1980, 0700, section 2.2, p.3

⁶⁵⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th May 1980, 1300, section 1.6

⁶⁵⁵ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 28th May 1980, 0001, section 3.

⁶⁵⁶ *The Times*, 28th May 1980, p.1 '29 nations decline invitation to Olympics'

⁶⁵⁷ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 28th May 1980, 0030, section 5.; RM N.Am 29th May 1980, 0030, section 2.

⁶⁵⁸ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 30th May 1980, 0030, section 5.

claimed for their Olympic Games – although this was a somewhat skewed claim. Many attendees, such as members of the team from Britain, were going not because of politics or a desire to support the Soviet Union, but because of a desire to compete at an Olympic Games.

In addition to concentrating on those who were not attending because of matters unrelated to the boycott campaign, Radio Moscow also attempted to portray those who had agreed specifically to boycott in a negative manner. Whilst it claimed some states were put under pressure by, and eventually wilted to, the United States Administration demand to boycott, there were other regimes Radio Moscow was far more critical of. The station told North American listeners that,

*'It is hard to believe that in a country claiming to be democratic the President by his personal decision can deprive hundreds of athletes of their inalienable right to take part... Such an arbitrary rule violates the elementary democratic freedoms and looks like dictatorship rather than democracy. And perhaps it is not accidental that the White House's anti-Olympic crusade has been supported mainly by the states with extremely reactionary regimes: Chile, Haiti, Paraguay, Honduras and South Korea'.*⁶⁵⁹

Not only did this allude to the divisive and people harm frames, but it also linked the boycott campaign to states who Radio Moscow claimed were predominantly 'extremely reactionary regimes'.⁶⁶⁰ Radio Moscow was making it clear that the US government was enlisting the support of some dubious regimes. This was a clear attempt to frame the boycott in a particular way, a boycott supported by Canada, Norway and West Germany would not be open to the same accusation of 'extremely reactionary regimes' – although it would still be open to political ideology. This was also a way of detracting from the obvious realisation that with only 85 announced attendees, there were states missing – but Radio Moscow wanted to make clear that those states, led by the US, were undesirable either because of disagreeable political ideology and/or sporting weakness.

8.2 AFGHANISTAN, THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AND PEACE PROPOSALS

North American listeners were retold on 19th May the reason the Soviet Union was involved in Afghanistan, 'the Government of Afghanistan applied to the USSR for military aid under a Treaty in existence and after repeated requests the USSR gave help...'.⁶⁶¹ This explanation was

⁶⁵⁹ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 30th May 1980, 0030, section 5.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶⁶¹ IWM/SU/C/219/RM N.Am 19th May 1980, 0030, *Kaleidoscope*, no.2

in response to a letter criticising the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan – ‘...the reason the USSR is in Afghanistan is because it wants to take over the country’s oil wells’.⁶⁶² This was a rare example of the radio station letting an anti-Soviet perspective get aired, although only so that it could be swiftly exposed as wrong – ‘...there are no oil wells in Afghanistan... The oil wells are in Iran... and the military presence and threat there is, as you hopefully know, not Soviet’.⁶⁶³ The negativity of the complaint was swiftly turned into a defence of Soviet involvement and an implicit attack on the United States.

On the 25th May listeners in North America were told about claimed CIA failures in Afghanistan – apparently the failures of the CIA had led to the US Administration taking out vengeance on the Olympic Games.⁶⁶⁴ Within days of this claim, North American listeners were again told about the involvement of the United States, China and Pakistan in Afghanistan, and also direct US help to Afghan mercenaries.⁶⁶⁵ This was a part of the wider imperialism and insurgency frames used to report Western involvement in Afghanistan. Home service listeners heard again the claim that Pakistan was the bridgehead for this involvement –

‘armed bandits are penetrating the country from Pakistan under the guise of nomads... at the training centres where the forces of aggression learn their job, officials from the American embassy in Pakistan are ever more often engaging openly in anti-Afghan propaganda. They advise their instructors to make wider use of caravan routes and nomads’ camps for transferring their hired killers into Afghanistan... quite a few centres for the training of diversionaries have been set up in Pakistan. Around Peshawar alone there are at least five such camps, which are maintained on CIA funds and with money coming from Egypt, Saudi Arabia and others hostile to democratic Afghanistan.’⁶⁶⁶

‘Democratic Afghanistan’ was being portrayed not only as the state working for peace in the region, with Pakistan the opposite, but also, significantly, as a government amongst equals – a stable regime with peaceful plans. Again, the ‘armed bandits’ were portrayed as fighting against Afghanistan, rather than the Soviet Union and the Afghan leadership they supported.

These claims were backed up with the words of others. Just days after Radio Moscow had again made these claims, the broadcaster reported an admission by a US spokesman that the US was

⁶⁶² IWM/SU/C/219/RM N.Am 19th May 1980, 0030, *Kaleidoscope*, no.2

⁶⁶³ Ibid

⁶⁶⁴ IWM/SU/C/219/RM N.Am 25th May 1980, 0001, Section 2.

⁶⁶⁵ IWM/SU/C/219/RM N.Am 27th May 1980, 2300, Section 7, and, 31st May 1980, 2300, Section 1.4

⁶⁶⁶ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 21st May 1980, 0400, no.6

‘aiding anti-government groups which infiltrate Afghanistan’.⁶⁶⁷ This made news bulletins worldwide, as can be expected for an announcement that confirmed previous Radio Moscow claims. Also, the new Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi made comments, in a German newspaper, critical of US, Chinese and Pakistan collaboration in Southern Asia, and these featured across many Radio Moscow stations in Western Europe, and the English service in Asia.⁶⁶⁸ There were also reports that Gandhi had made accusations about the use of US made chemical weapons by Afghan anti-government fighters, these appeared in broadcasts to Eastern Europe, broadcasts in Arabic, Dari and Shona, and also on the English-language Asian service.⁶⁶⁹ Not only did these broadcasts link the US to the insurgents, but they also linked the US to a group using chemical weapons.

Whilst the United States and others were criticised for their attempts to worsen the situation in Afghanistan, the Afghan government, on 14th May 1980, put forward a proposal with regard to settling differences within the region. This was seized upon by Radio Moscow as an opportunity to further frame the situation in Afghanistan as ‘normalising’, and to show the Afghan government was in control. Home service listeners heard that ‘Afghanistan’s government is striving for the speediest possible settlement of the regional problems...’.⁶⁷⁰ The problems, as admitted to, were not solely in Afghanistan, but the whole region! More importantly, it was the Afghan government trying to sort them out. The Afghan government was reported as trying to reach out to Iran and Pakistan with a regional agreement, the specifics of which were not explained. Listeners had to believe that it was peaceful and positive because it had been approved by many groups, including the Soviet Union. Of more importance to Radio Moscow than the specifics of a peace proposal was showing the Afghan government as desiring peace,

⁶⁶⁷ Examples being the following: IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 31st May 1980, 1300, Section 1.7; IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 31st May 1980, 2000, Section 1.3; IWM/SU/C/219/RM N.Am 31st May 1980, 2300, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 31st May 1980, 1947, Section 1; SU/D/ RM Fre Alg 31st May 1980, 2000, Section 1.5; SU/E/176 RM Serb-Croat 31st May 1980, 2000, Section 1.3; SU/D/214 RM Italian 31st May 1980, 2100, Section 1.3.

⁶⁶⁸ Examples of Gandhi on US, China and Pakistan – IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 30th May 1980, 2000, section 1.3; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 30th May 1980, 2100; IWM/SU/C/219 RM Eng Asia 31st May 1980, 1400, section 1.4

⁶⁶⁹ Examples of Gandhi on chemical weapons – IWM/SU/E/ RM Ger 2nd June 1980, 2000, section 1.2; RM Bulg 3rd June 1980, 1630, section 4; IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 3rd June 1980, 1500, section 1.5; IWM/SU/F/ RM Dari 3rd June 1980, 2326; IWM/SU/F/ RM Shona 3rd June 1980, 1600, Section 2; IWM/SU/C/220 RM Eng Asia 3rd June 1980, 1400, section 1.4

⁶⁷⁰ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 20th May 1980, 0800, no.8

and not only that, being strong enough to be the state putting forward the solutions to the ‘regional problems’.⁶⁷¹

North American listeners were informed that implementation of the proposal ‘would be guaranteed by the Soviet Union and the United States’.⁶⁷² The specifics of the plan were never expanded upon in any Radio Moscow broadcast, even though they had, it was claimed, been supported by ‘...participants of the recent session of the political consultative committee of the Warsaw Treaty organisation...’, ‘...had also been welcomed by different Arab countries...’, and, had ‘...been given considerable attention by Western leaders.’⁶⁷³ The specifics were not important to Radio Moscow though, what was important was framing the proposal in a way that portrayed the new Afghan government as working for peace, beating the insurgents and playing a significant role on the international stage. The proposal helped to frame Afghanistan as ‘normalising’ and emphasise that the government was in control.

The proposals by the Afghan government gained far more coverage than the admission by a US spokesman that the US had been heavily involved in Afghanistan all along, despite the latter supporting the accusations Soviet media had made. On 24th May, the Home service reported a *Pravda* article discussing the Afghan proposals – focusing on how ‘imperialism reaction... turned Pakistan into the main launching pad for anti-Afghan schemes’.⁶⁷⁴ On the 27th, a meeting between the Yemeni leader, Ali Nasir Muhammad, and Brezhnev was stated as claiming that,

*‘A political settlement is fully possible. Its core is a guaranteed end to military incursions into Afghanistan by the forces of counter-revolution from the territories of neighbouring states.’*⁶⁷⁵

So whilst the US were admitting involvement in Afghanistan, the Afghan government was being reported as trying to solve the regional problems – an example of the Afghan control frame used to portray the situation as Radio Moscow wanted it perceived; the US was the aggressor, the Soviet-supported Afghan government was working for peace.

As with the reporting of the US admission, the solution proposed by the Afghan government was reported across the Radio Moscow airwaves without any noticeable regional shifts in the argument. Unlike the US statement though, it was not reported across the networks on the same

⁶⁷¹ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 20th May 1980, 0800, no.8

⁶⁷² IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 23rd May 1980, 2300, Section 4

⁶⁷³ IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 23rd May 1980, 2300, Section 4

⁶⁷⁴ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 24th May 1980, 2100, *Pravda* Review, no.7

⁶⁷⁵ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 27th May 1980, 1800, no.3, p.3

day. Some, such as those in Western Europe, only received one mention of the proposal in the weeks after, despite the usefulness for framing the Afghan government as stable enough and capable of making proposals to settle ‘regional’ differences.⁶⁷⁶ The proposal clearly seems to imply the Afghan government was getting to its feet unaided on the international stage, and it was added to by reports of the Afghan government actually complaining to the United Nations over the fighting against them.⁶⁷⁷ Specifically, this was related to Afghan claims that the USA, China and Britain were exporting gas and other chemical weapons for ‘anti-Afghan bands’ to use, but again, it was a further example of the new Afghanistan government making its voice heard on the international stage.⁶⁷⁸ Additionally though, the report also linked the US and others to the use of gas weapons, framing their involvement in aggressive and harmful ways. Perhaps because of the clear implication that there was fighting in the country, this development was not reported via the Home Service.

It is easy to see how Gandhi’s comments, as reported by Radio Moscow, supported the overall Soviet frame of Western aggression against the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. On the 19th May, she was reported as complaining about the bandits being secretly sent into Afghanistan from Pakistan and Iran.⁶⁷⁹ By the 30th May, in a separate interview, Gandhi complained about military cooperation between the United States, China and Pakistan.⁶⁸⁰ Radio Moscow had persisted with the claim that the ‘bandits’ were supplied by the United States, Gandhi was an external source that supported these claims. She was also a useful source of support for reports supporting Soviet actions in Afghanistan – in yet another interview reported around this time, Radio Moscow claimed she ‘...refuted western news media inventions that the USSR is pursuing expansionist aims in Afghanistan’.⁶⁸¹

Another useful source for praising the Soviet Union was Babrak Karmal, the Afghan President, who appeared across the airwaves thanking the Soviet Union for various friendly actions. Home service listeners heard him thank the Soviet Union ‘...for its great and disinterested help to Afghanistan in the sphere of education’, and, in a separate speech a few days later, heard him

⁶⁷⁶ For example: IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Eur 30th May 1980, 1730, section 3.3; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 23rd May 1980, 1730, section 2; RM Spain 20th May 1980, 2200, section 2.4.

⁶⁷⁷ IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 30th May 1980, 1730, section 1.1

⁶⁷⁸ IWM/SU/C/219/ RM N.Am 30th May 1980, 2300, Section 1.2

⁶⁷⁹ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 19th May 1980, 2000, Section 1.3; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 20th May 1980, 0400, Section 1.4

⁶⁸⁰ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 30th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 30th May 1980, 2000, 1.3; IWM/SU/C/219 RM Eng Asia 31st May 1980, 1400, Section 1.4

⁶⁸¹ IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 18th May 1980, 2000, Section 1.5

speak of the Afghan people's appreciation of Brezhnev.⁶⁸² Other regions of the world heard Karmal thank Brezhnev for the support the Soviet Union had given to the peace proposals drawn up by the Afghan leadership.⁶⁸³ These reports again made clear there was more to the Soviet assistance than military support, which again builds on Radio Moscow's desire to frame the assistance in a friendly, peaceful and helpful manner.

Radio Moscow was not only using the Afghan peace proposals to impress upon listeners the idea that Afghanistan was a state striving for peace – listeners also heard more reports about large numbers of families who had fled Afghanistan under the previous Amin regime returning home. It seems they did not report this to listeners in North America or the Soviet Union; however it, and how life in Afghanistan had improved, was broadcast to many other regions of the world.⁶⁸⁴ Not only was Radio Moscow reporting the Afghan government as a regime of peace and one that was active on the international stage, the Afghan control frame, but life in Afghanistan itself was also being reported through the normalisation frame – the country was becoming safer as demonstrated by families willing and able to return home.

On 25th May, the World Service, citing newspapers in Kabul as its source, claimed that 'in the past few days over 1,200 families returned to settlements in the eastern province Konar, and over 800 families to the central province Ghowr'.⁶⁸⁵ By 29th May, this story had developed, and the same station was now claiming that 11,000 families had returned home, '...after fleeing from the persecutions of the Amin regime'.⁶⁸⁶ The development of the story changed the reason why many had left – on the broadcasts of the 25th May, Afghans had fled '...under the influence of the campaign of lies launched by the enemies of the April revolution...', yet by the 29th this had changed to a focus on persecutions by the previous Afghan President.⁶⁸⁷ The earlier story implied foreign actors were getting through and being successful. The second reason eliminated

⁶⁸² IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 24th May 1980, 1600, no.10; IWM/SU/B/532 RM Home 29th May 1980, 0500, no.8

⁶⁸³ It would seem these appeared almost exclusively on the English language networks, although this can never be fully known. There is evidence of these reports appearing via IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 28th May 1980, 2300, Section 1.2; RM GBI 28th May 1980, 2000, section 1.2; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 28th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.2; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Spain 28th May 1980, 2200, no.2

⁶⁸⁴ Examples are: IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 29th May 1980, 2000, no.8; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.9 and RM WSE 25th May 1980, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/C/219 RM Eng Africa 29th May 1980, 2000, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/C/RM Eng Asia 30th May 1980, 1500, Section 1.7; IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 25th May 1980, 1730, Section 1.5; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Port Europe 25th May 1980, 1900, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Hung 29th May 1980, 2000, Section 6.

⁶⁸⁵ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th May 1980, 1300, Section 1.4

⁶⁸⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 29th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.9

⁶⁸⁷ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th May 1980, 1300, Section 1.4. A similar sentiment appeared via French for Europe broadcasts – IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 25th May 1980, 1730, Section 1.5

any suggestion of anti-Afghan actor success – it was all about Amin, again personifying the problems Afghanistan had faced before the Soviet invasion. Regardless of the reason though, the story was part of the on-going frame to suggest all was well in Afghanistan, that the country was finding its feet and overcoming the foreign insurgents.

Continuing the theme of life in Afghanistan, the World Service reported a *Pravda* story about life in Herat, showing how everything was actually normal despite Western claims –

*‘...captured by rebels as Western news agencies have claimed... The Governor of the Herat Province... who, according to Western news agencies had been shot, told the correspondent that life in the city had been normal all the time. He said the authorities had begun to build homes for workers.... They have also opened courses for liquidating illiteracy. The Governor ridiculed the reports about the seizure of Herat and called them invented.’*⁶⁸⁸

This report was clearly trying to get across to listeners the opinion that Afghanistan was a state that had been through turmoil and was now in a stable position to rebuild. It reaffirmed the idea that the situation was improving.

8.2.1 *The Islamic Conference, Afghanistan and Foreign News Reporting*

The 11th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad, Pakistan, from 17th-22nd May 1980, was once again critical of Soviet actions in Afghanistan, commenting on how the situation had not changed, ‘despite the call by a considerable majority of the members of the UN General Assembly and the unanimous demand of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers’.⁶⁸⁹ The conference also proposed setting up a working group to ‘watch over the development in Afghanistan and to find ways and means of implementing the resolutions to be adopted’.⁶⁹⁰ As with the Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Conference held in January 1980, it was not a conference that praised Soviet actions in Afghanistan.

As such Radio Moscow reporting did not comment on such statements as point seven of the conference resolution -

⁶⁸⁸ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 26th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.6

⁶⁸⁹ Final Communiqué of the Eleventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Islamabad, 17th-22nd May 1980, Point 8.

⁶⁹⁰ Final Communiqué of the Eleventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Islamabad, 17th-22nd May 1980, Point 7.

*'His Excellency expressed his great regret that despite the call by a considerable majority of the members of the U.N. General Assembly and the unanimous demand of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, foreign troops were still there in Afghanistan in large numbers, and the peoples of Afghanistan were deprived of their legitimate right to determine their form of government and to order their lives in accordance with their traditions. Men, women and children in Afghanistan were being obliged to leave their hearths and homes because of the situation prevailing in that country.'*⁶⁹¹

Whilst not directly referencing the Soviet Union, in the same way that UN ES-6/2 did not, there was clear annoyance with, and condemnation of, Soviet actions. However, Radio Moscow concentrated once again on the motivations behind the meeting, rather than the outcome of the meeting. World Service listeners heard that the conference was attended by '...leaders of counter-revolutionary bands entrenched in countries bordering Afghanistan', whilst listeners to the Arabic service were repeatedly told about the US trying to use some of its Islamic followers to force resolutions upon the conference.⁶⁹² The implication was quite clear, nothing favourable to the Soviet Union or Afghanistan would come out of a conference attended by such groups. This was the same portrayal that was applied to the Islamic Conference condemnation in January. However, Radio Moscow did not deem it news worth telling in any detail to audiences in Britain and Ireland, North America, or even the Soviet Union itself. Comment on the resolution of the Islamic Conference was primarily reserved for audiences in Asia and the Middle East.

Across the Radio Moscow network, there was only a passing reference to the outcome of the conference, via the Arabic language service –

*'...the Islamabad Conference, under the pressure of certain forces, adopted a resolution concerning Afghanistan, which is in fact, interference in the internal affairs of that country as well as an attempt to cast doubts on the Soviet Union... spreading seeds of antagonism between the Arab nation and its friends at the fore of which are the Soviet Union and other Socialist states.'*⁶⁹³

⁶⁹¹ Final Communique of the Eleventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Islamabad, 17th-22nd May 1980, Point 7.

⁶⁹² IWM/SU/C/219 RM WSE 20th May 1980, 0700, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/F/ RM ARABIC 21st May 1980, 1500, Section 4 ('...in spite of the USA having used some member states...'), and, RM ARABIC 25th May 1980, 1500, Section 3, p.2 (...the Islamic Conference, under the pressure of certain forces...')

⁶⁹³ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 25th May 1980, 1500, Section 3, p.2

This was not a discussion of the point that condemned foreign troops in Afghanistan, but instead an attack on the idea to create a panel to watch over Afghanistan. Importantly for the framing of the report, this statement made it clear that Radio Moscow believed it was not an independent conference that resolved to condemn the Soviet invasion, but one influenced by others. The Arabic service claimed Afghanistan was a distraction from the real issues facing Islam, such as the ‘struggle against Zionist occupation’.⁶⁹⁴ The World Service informed its listeners that ‘...the debate on the events in Afghanistan is an attempt to distract the attention of the Islamic world from serious problems facing it’.⁶⁹⁵ By implication, Afghanistan was not a ‘serious problem’ for the Islamic world – in this manner the resolution on Afghanistan was dismissed.

Again not reporting on the outcomes, Radio Moscow reported complaints about a lack of Afghan representation at the conference, that Libya had condemned the conference, and that Afghanistan did not consider itself bound by the resolutions of the conference.⁶⁹⁶ These arguments appeared over different language networks, but they had the same goal – to discredit those attending, and therefore any outcomes of, the Islamic Conference.

Rather than consider the resolution that condemned the foreign intervention in Afghanistan, Radio Moscow instead focused their attacks on the conference around the following statement -

*‘...it was incumbent on this Conference to study the problem in all its aspects and to consider setting up a committee whose only aim would be to keep watch over the development in Afghanistan...’.*⁶⁹⁷

Doing so avoided the need to report condemnation of Soviet troops in Afghanistan – instead they could criticise the Islamic Conference for interfering. This was interference in a state that Radio Moscow had been arguing was able to stand on its own internationally, one that had put forward peace treaties of its own, and one that was welcoming Afghans who had previously fled the old regime. Radio Moscow had long been complaining of foreign interference in Afghanistan, and here was another example. However, rather than go on the attack, the only real mention of this resolution via most broadcasts was a statement that the Afghan Foreign Minister

⁶⁹⁴ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 25th May 1980, 1500, Section 3, p.2

⁶⁹⁵ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 21st May 1980, 0900, Section 1.6

⁶⁹⁶ On Afghanistan representation - IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 21st May 1980, 1500, Section 2.2; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 20th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.4; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 21st May 1980, 1600, Section 1.9. Libya comments – IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 22nd May 1980, 0500, no.9. Not bound by resolution – IWM/SU/D RM Fre Africa 28th May 1980, 1700, Section 1.2

⁶⁹⁷ Final Communique of the Eleventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Islamabad, 17th-22nd May 1980, Point 8.

was reviewing it.⁶⁹⁸ The resolution was reported using the Afghan control frame, by claiming the Afghan leadership had a say in the whole process of setting up a committee – which was not the case, especially as the Afghanistan government was at that time suspended from the Islamic Conference.

Whilst Radio Moscow claims may not have represented the Islamic Conference reality, the broadcaster was still keen to point out when others had projected untruths onto their audiences. The Home service audience was informed about Western lies in Herat, with Western propaganda ‘...attempting to make use of the events in Afghanistan in order to portray some sort of doomsday...’, and the pre-planned US military budget exploiting the situations in Afghanistan and Iran.⁶⁹⁹ Effectively, they were informed about perceived falsity in the Western press and the reasons behind it. *Pravda*’s comments on Herat rebuked foreign news reporting and appeared across the board of Radio Moscow stations, and attempted three tasks.⁷⁰⁰ Firstly, the comments were an attempt to dispel evident Western claims about Herat. Secondly, through the words of the Governor of Herat, the report put forward the view that Herat, and perhaps by implication other parts of Afghanistan, were as normal and not as foreign media had portrayed them. Thirdly, by showing Western lies over Herat, this report was an attempt to get listeners thinking about other stories in the press that may have presented Soviet actions in Afghanistan, or indeed life in Afghanistan at that point, in a negative way. This last point is particularly apt as the story seemingly appeared almost everywhere, with the exception of the Warsaw Pact states of Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. It seems stories such as this were used by Radio Moscow to challenge the credibility of Western media where the latter was readily available.

Pravda was also a source of information about the proposals put forward by the Afghan government. However, reporting of the newspaper article was concentrated on the Warsaw Pact

⁶⁹⁸ The same basic comment appears to have been broadcast on nearly every station. Here are a selection: IWM/SU/C/219 RM N.Am 28th May 1980, 2300, Section 7; IWM/SU/C/219 RM GBI 27th May 1980, 2000, Section 1.6; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 28th May 1980, 1800, Section 1.2 and 27th May 1980, 1600, Section 1.5; IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Eur 27th May 1980, 1730, Section 1.5; SU/D/214 RM Italian 27th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.5; IWM/SU/E/ RM Finn 28th May 1980, 1630, Section 1.2; IWM/SU/E/ RM Bulg 27th May 1980, 1630, Section 1.5; SU/F/ RM Dari 27th May 1980, 1430, Section 2.3; IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 27th May 1980, 1500, Section 1.4.

⁶⁹⁹ IWM/SU/B/531 RM Home 26th May 1980, 2300, no.11; RM Home 30th May 1980, 1015, no.5; RM Home 29th May 1980, 2300, *Pravda* Review, no.11

⁷⁰⁰ Some examples of this broadcast are: IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 26th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.6; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 27th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.6; IWM/SU/D/214 RM Italian 27th May 1980, 1900, Section 1.3; IWM/SU/E/ RM Finn 27th May 1980, 1630, Section 1.7; IWM/SU/F/ RM Dari 27th May 1980, 1430, Section 2.4

states rather than being broadcast everywhere.⁷⁰¹ It was not heard via the World Service, or it seems any English language broadcasts, and appears only to have been broadcast in Western Europe to Italian or French listeners.⁷⁰² Western newspapers were not sources of information; they were, according to Radio Moscow, sources of disinformation (unless they seemed to provide a view that suited Radio Moscow, in which case they were often reported to audiences elsewhere). French listeners to Radio Moscow were reminded that it was ‘American propaganda and certain reactionary organs of the French press...’ informing them that recent talks between French President Giscard and Brezhnev had achieved nothing for France.⁷⁰³ Furthermore, attributing events in Afghanistan to the worsening world situation was false, Afghanistan was but a pretext for pre-planned American and, because this was broadcast to France, NATO schemes.⁷⁰⁴ Italian listeners were told that the Afghan Information Minister ‘accuses Western propaganda of distorting events in his country’.⁷⁰⁵ World Service listeners were told about Western radio’s lies concerning Afghanistan, North American listeners were told, in response to letters sent in to the station, about ‘cock and bull stories’ in the US press.⁷⁰⁶ Whilst *Pravda* was held up as the truth on Afghanistan, Western broadcasting was portrayed as completely the opposite – but then this was being broadcast to listeners who may have been susceptible to those views already.

8.3 SUMMARY

The broadcasting surrounding Afghanistan continued to portray the country as peaceful and progressing, even on the international stage. This may have been a counter to foreign news press claiming otherwise, and in the Soviet Union itself, it may have been presented in this way to pacify mothers worried about their soldier sons. This was particularly the case with broadcasts that discussed how Soviet help had improved education and other infrastructure, moving the assistance away from military engagement. The Afghan control and normalisation frames were prominent, with broadcasting designed to give the impression that the Afghanistan government

⁷⁰¹ IWM/SU/E/ RM German 28th May 1980, 2000, Section 4; IWM/SU/E/ RM Czech 25th May 1980, 1600, Section 2; IWM/SU/E/ RM Bulgarian 25th May 1980, 1630, Section 2; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Hungarian 25th May 1980, 2000, Section 2.1; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Serb-Croat 25th May 1980, 1700, Section 2; IWM/SU/E/176 RM Polish 25th May 1980, 1700, Section 2.

⁷⁰² IWM/SU/D/214/ RM Italian 24th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.6; IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 29th May 1980, 1730, Section 4

⁷⁰³ IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 30th May 1980, 1730, Section 5

⁷⁰⁴ IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Europe 30th May 1980, 1730, Section 5

⁷⁰⁵ IWM/SU/D/214/ RM Italian 28th May 1980, 2100, Section 1.2

⁷⁰⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 1st June 1980, 0001, Section 2

was capable, and in putting forward a peace proposal, actively working for peace in the region. Key to this was the word 'region' – some of Radio Moscow's commentating claimed that Afghanistan was working for peace in the region, not just within Afghanistan itself. The situation within the country was being framed with the suggestion that the whole region was in turmoil. Even the Islamic Conference was dismissed as trying to interfere – not only were many members readily associated with the United States, but Radio Moscow was trying to make it clear that Afghanistan did not need any interfering with. Reporting of Afghanistan at this time continued to be framed in a way that gave the impression that the country was getting back to normal and everything was fine.

This was not the case with the Olympic boycott campaign though. By the very nature of the deadline day making states and national Olympic committees commit to attending or not, it affected the way Radio Moscow framed its reporting. By 27th May, the IOC published a list of those who had accepted and those who had declined, the only grey area Radio Moscow could argue over were the states who had neither accepted or declined. There can be no doubt that only 85 Olympic committees accepting the invitation was something of a blow to Soviet aspirations for the Moscow Games. However, rather than dwell on this number, and ignoring the difference between the reality and the 102 attendees claimed by the radio station just days before the deadline, Radio Moscow instead chose to focus on the reasons why some teams were not attending. As many as possible of the non-attendees were explained away through arguments far removed from Afghanistan – teams who were following the US boycott lead were portrayed as those from undesirable regimes. In this way, Radio Moscow framed the outcome of the invitations by not focusing on the outright number, but instead concentrating on reducing the amount of states it claimed were actually supporting the USA. 85 teams may have been less than at Montreal, but it was far more importantly still considerably more, Radio Moscow claimed, than those who supported the US boycott campaign. Radio Moscow did not give up on suggesting this number would increase either, by readily promoting the IOC's statement that they would consider late claims. However, it was not something they dwelled on.

Elements of localising the frame can be seen here, with broadcasts tending to present a wide variety of attendees. States local to the target audience were mentioned alongside those from further afield, to give the impression that not only would there be a worldwide gathering at the Games, but many local states would also be in attendance. Thus, the boycott was failing on both a worldwide level and a more local level. For broadcasts to North America, there were also specific statements about the pariah states that the US government was allying itself with over the boycott. Broadcasts to Europe were noticeably more focused on telling listeners that other European states were attending the Olympics, which suggests Radio Moscow saw the area as a

key battleground. This linked to the divisions Radio Moscow was trying to place between the United States and Europe, and between governments in the region that actively supported the US and the people within those states the Soviet broadcaster claimed were suffering because of this support. Jimmy Carter may have been using the Olympic Games boycott to create divisions between the Soviet people and the Soviet leadership, but Radio Moscow was using the campaign to try and emphasise divides between the United States and the rest of the world, with particular emphasis on its European allies.

A further frame that developed from this moment on was based on quality. No longer could the Soviet Union claim the Games would be the biggest ever, but they could continue to claim that the Games would provide excellent quality. The crux of this argument was that the USA, West Germany, Canada and Japan, some of the big-name boycotters, had been overtaken in terms of Olympic ability – indeed that it was perhaps one of the reasons the USA, and the Canadian team who even failed to win a gold medal at their own Olympics four years previous, would not go to Moscow. Not only did this sporting frame report the boycott campaign very differently from previous political frames, it further removed the cause of the boycott campaign from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Claims it was part of Jimmy Carter's election campaign had quietened down; claims that it was due to sporting inadequacies had increased. This was perhaps the biggest development in terms of framing the boycott campaign at this time. Gone were the claims linked to quantity, on the rise were the claims that the boycott, what little there was of it according to Radio Moscow, would not affect the quality of the athletes on display. The boycott was still reported through these frames as a failure. Whether or not the events in the Olympic Games, only two months away at this point, would back up the claim about quality is investigated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 9

RADIO MOSCOW REPORTS THE OLYMPICS

The Soviet report into the Moscow Olympic Games, 'The Official Report of the Organizing Committee of the Games of the XXII Olympiad' explained that,

*'The Opening Ceremony and Closing Ceremony, essential elements of the Games, provide a good opportunity for demonstrating the basic Olympic ideals and principles.'*⁷⁰⁷

Following this was a lengthy description of the opening ceremony, from the words of both Ignati Novikov, the President of the Moscow Olympic Organising Committee and Lord Killanin, outgoing President of the IOC, which ended with a description of the finale - 16,000 participants created 'a mosaic picture of the Earth with a star on it symbolising Moscow, host of the Games.'⁷⁰⁸ This vast number in itself, combining the performance artists with the athletes, was part of the frame used to portray the event as successful through sheer quantity of numbers. The report also commented on media coverage -

*'France Presse... noted that the Moscow Olympic Games had begun with an impressive ceremony... The Washington Post reported that the Soviet Union had opened the Games with a magnificent spectacle unequalled in Olympic history.'*⁷⁰⁹

The Times also described the opening ceremony, as '...colourful and superbly organised...'⁷¹⁰ However, this was the one positive in an otherwise damning indictment of Soviet manipulation of the opening ceremony -

*'For the millions of Russians watching the colourful and superbly organised opening ceremony on television, the Western protest was scarcely noticeable. Soviet television skilfully avoided showing any of the Olympic banners flying in the place of national flags, and quickly cut to shots of the cheering crowd whenever a lone standard-bearer appeared.'*⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁷ Games of the XXII Olympiad, Volume 2. Organisation, p.280

⁷⁰⁸ Games of the XXII Olympiad, Volume 2. Organisation, p.283

⁷⁰⁹ Games of the XXII Olympiad, Volume 2. Organisation, p.306

⁷¹⁰ *The Times* 21st July 1980, p.1; issue 60682, column D. 'Silver for Britons as Russians strike gold'.

⁷¹¹ Ibid

Whilst Soviet television was adept at avoiding showing anything other than hints of the political maelstrom surrounding the Olympics, Radio Moscow was not quite so fearful. However, it did all it could in the build-up to the Games, and even during them, to dispel any ideas that the boycott was anything but a failure.

This chapter covers the broadcasting from 12th-26th July 1980, the weeks either side of the Olympic opening ceremony (19th July). It analyses the build-up to the ceremony and the ways Radio Moscow reported the spectacle during the first week of the Olympic Games. The chapter demonstrates how reporting switched from condemning the boycott to demonstrating how the boycott had completely failed. After months of build-up, the opening ceremony was the moment when words became actions, and the prayers of many, for the boycott to either succeed or fail in highlighting Soviet actions in Afghanistan, were realised.

As demonstrated by the previous chapters, Radio Moscow had attempted to frame the reporting since December 1979 in a manner that split the reaction, the Olympic boycott, from the cause, the invasion of Afghanistan. This chapter continues to explore how the two were separated and how, increasingly, Radio Moscow went to great lengths to portray Afghanistan as a stable state getting involved peacefully on the international stage. One way they did this was to send a team to the Olympic Games – a team that received ‘stormy and pointed cheers from the crowd’ at the opening ceremony.⁷¹²

9.1 THE OLYMPIC GAMES ON THE HORIZON

In the build-up to the opening ceremony, audiences around the world were informed about who would be attending, and who had already arrived. Of all Radio Moscow listeners, those within the Soviet Union were most frequently told about the influx of foreigners into the USSR for the Games. These ranged from an announcement on 16th July that ‘nearly 6,000 Olympic participants have already settled at the Olympic village’, through to an explanation that ‘1,200 representatives of the electronic press, representing dozens of radio and TV companies of the world...’ were also in Moscow.⁷¹³ Whilst reports such as these can be construed as fitting the quantity frame that had previously been used to attack the boycott, this could also be construed as typical promotion in the days before a major sporting event. In terms of embracing the world, Soviet listeners were told about the different nations attending – ‘It is pleasant to stress that the

⁷¹² *The Times*, 21st July 1980, p.6, col.H, ‘Outer space message for Olympic crowds’.

⁷¹³ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 16th July 1980, 1930, no.5; RM Home 17th July 1980, 2000, ‘Mayak on Sport’, no.1

Olympic debut of the athletes of Vietnam, Cyprus, the Seychelles, Zimbabwe, Laos, and Botswana will take place in Moscow'.⁷¹⁴ On 18th July, they heard that,

*'Some of the largest teams in the history of the Olympics have been sent to Moscow by Poland, Sweden, Hungary, Brazil, Zambia, the Korean People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and Yugoslavia.'*⁷¹⁵

The statement is somewhat misleading as it implies the likes of Nepal had sent some of the largest teams in the history of the Olympics, when in fact they had merely beaten their own previous participation records. There are, for example, only eleven Nepalese athletes listed as having participated in the Games – hardly large in Olympic terms.⁷¹⁶ Poland did send 321 athletes, Sweden 145, Brazil 109 – but these hardly compare with the teams the Soviet Union fielded in 1980 or 1976, 560 and 410, or the US team from 1976, numbering 396.⁷¹⁷ The point was to frame attending teams as large and from all parts of the world. An American writer was quoted on the Home service, pushing these points further, claiming the Games 'will further friendship', whilst another broadcast quoted an American writer [it is not clear whether this was the same one] saying 'participation in the Olympics is vitally important for all', and a German artistic director was reported as claiming they 'serve mutual understanding for all'.⁷¹⁸

Clearly building up the Games to be a success, not only for sport but for world peace, and by implication and weight of numbers framing the boycott as failure, these broadcasts also put across some other aspects of the Games that reflected well on Moscow and the Soviet Union. Technologically, Soviet listeners were meant to be impressed that,

*'For the first time all socialist countries and not only the European ones but also Vietnam... the Korean People's Democratic Republic, Cuba, will be able to watch the Olympic sports contests via the Intersputnik communications satellite system.'*⁷¹⁹

Another report claimed that 'broadcasts can be carried out simultaneously via 20 colour TV channels... journalists have at their disposal 1,206 commentators' seats at all sports sites...'.⁷²⁰

⁷¹⁴ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 18th July 1980, 1030, 'Mayak on Sport'

⁷¹⁵ Ibid

⁷¹⁶ *The Official Report of Games of the XXII Olympiad - Volume 3: Participants and Results*, 1980. lists only 11 Nepalese athletes.

⁷¹⁷ *The Official Report of Games of the XXII Olympiad - Volume 3: Participants and Results.*; IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 18th July 1980, 1030, 'Mayak on Sport'

⁷¹⁸ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 14th July 1980, 2200, no.1; RM Home 18th July 1980, 1730, no.2 and no.3

⁷¹⁹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 16th July 1980, 2016, section 5, p.2

⁷²⁰ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 16th July 1980, 1930, no.5

A further bulletin stated that ‘hundreds of millions of sports lovers... will be able to watch the Olympic reportages from Moscow on TV’.⁷²¹ Technological advance was being mixed in with recording just how many states would be attending the Games, both designed to frame the Soviet Union as technologically advanced and the Games as a success. Even with this positive framing of the Games, which would most likely have appeared whether there was a boycott campaign or not, there was a mention of the boycott campaign. Home Service listeners heard a French athlete claiming that, ‘the fact that most sportsmen in the West, in spite of the pressure exerted on them, have come to the Olympic Games... demonstrates their adherence to the ideals of the Olympic movement.’⁷²² Not only were there large teams appearing, new teams were appearing, technology was providing access for viewers in many new places, and even the athletes who had been pressed not to attend were attending.

The World Service also talked about the specially built TV and radio centre that allowed for 20 television and 100 radio lines to be available.⁷²³ Within Europe, rather than focus on this technology, many broadcasts concerning the television and radio coverage just assured listeners that Radio Moscow would be providing commentary in full. Italian listeners were told precisely this, as were listeners in Portugal.⁷²⁴ Listeners to the Serb-Croat service were told that the ‘Olympics will be widely televised’, and were advised on which bulletins to listen for Olympic news.⁷²⁵ Listeners to the Polish service were told in more detail about technical preparations –

*‘one hundred radio channels have been prepared in Moscow to broadcast in seventy languages of the world. We hope that Moscow Radio will help you feel the Olympic atmosphere.’*⁷²⁶

This focus on technology and broadcasting took on a more critical edge in broadcasting to Britain & Ireland though. Rather than discuss Soviet technology and how the world would see the Games, Radio Moscow discussed how some regions would not see the Games. ‘The BBC and ITV had succumbed to political pressure... and will not be showing coverage of the Olympic Games between 1930 and 2230 hours’ claimed a commentator on 14th July, in

⁷²¹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 18th July 1980, 2300, ‘Pravda Review’, no.3

⁷²² IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 16th July 1980, 1930, no.5

⁷²³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 18th July 1980, 1100, section 7.c

⁷²⁴ IWM/SU/D/ RM Italian 16th July 1980, 2100, no.2, RM Eur Port 18th July 1980, 1900, section 2.4 (This is a repeat of IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 18th July 1980, 1100, section 7.c)

⁷²⁵ IWM/SU/E/ RM Serb 18th July 1980, 2000, section 5.

⁷²⁶ IWM/SU/E/ RM Polish 18th July 1980, 1500, section 5.

response to listeners' letters.⁷²⁷ This was a very different claim to that made via the World Service in March 1980 – 'the British television companies have announced their decision to provide maximum coverage...'.⁷²⁸ However, it fitted with an earlier report attacking a specific journalist – 'That Mr Tony Buckingham is a liar is an under-statement' – he had according to the Radio Moscow commentator (the original newspaper article has not been traced) claimed that planes are surrounded by 'Russian troops', hotel assistants were rude, and the KGB were everywhere, all labelled 'utter bilge' by Radio Moscow.⁷²⁹ This was extrapolated to the western media as a whole – 'the same kind of things are said not only in English but also American newspapers, and they are said by the Western media in general'.⁷³⁰ This attack on a specific journalist is interesting as it seems to have been a rare tactic from Radio Moscow. Typically, the personification of an argument concentrated around national leaders and politicians, for example Jimmy Carter or Margaret Thatcher. Even when criticising journalism, Radio Moscow tended to label whole newspaper or media outlets rather than the specific people within them – dividing the journalists from the organisations in a similar manner to how it tried to suggest there was a divide between the Soviet supporting people and the imperialist governments. The reasons for this distortion by the Western media, and perhaps the desire for Radio Moscow to talk up the broadcast technology providing the Games to the world, were made clear – 'The Olympic Games offer a unique opportunity for millions of people to see for themselves. What those who come will see will differ profoundly from what they have been told for decades'.⁷³¹ Restrictive coverage in the West was part of an attempt to hide the truth about the Soviet Union from people who had only heard what local media had to say. However, the broadcast also let the façade slip – the Moscow Olympics was not just about sport, but also about rebuking years of criticism of the Soviet Union.

Lord Killanin was reported via the Home service as having the wish that journalists 'should objectively cover the 1980 Olympics', with the Home service telling listeners that there were Western journalists who,

⁷²⁷ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 14th July 1980, 2000, section 8.

⁷²⁸ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 27th March 1980, 2100, Section 2.5

⁷²⁹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 12th July 1980, 2000, section 8, p.8

⁷³⁰ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 12th July 1980, 2000, section 8, p.8

⁷³¹ Ibid

*'to all appearances are interested not only and not so much in the Olympic games as in completely different themes which have nothing in common with sport or with the Olympic idea of strengthening friendship and peace between peoples'.*⁷³²

On the 19th, listeners heard foreign lies personified into one person, Margaret Thatcher, who,

*'attempted to make again her contribution to the anti-Olympic campaign... The bellicose Lady went as far as to allege that Moscow is a closed city for its population. But all these attempts collapse when confronted with facts... Moscow became today world capital of sports, which irreproachably fulfils all the conditions of the Olympic Charter.'*⁷³³

Condemnation of these allegations about controls in the Olympic city also appeared in broadcasts to Britain and Ireland, which tried to make listeners question the claims about restrictions on journalists. A report by CBS journalist Denis Baxter claiming there were 'tight controls by the authorities of all reports from the Soviet capital concerning the Olympic Games' was dismissed by observer Igor Dmitriyev with the counter claim that if there were indeed 'guides and interpreters who see to it that reports by foreign correspondents conform to the official line' how could dispatches appear that were inaccurate or did not conform?⁷³⁴ Foreign reporting that was critical of the Soviet Union was portrayed as lying, in a further addition to the frame of the foreign media and governments as misrepresenting the truth, whether in Afghanistan or Moscow.

That Moscow children would be removed from the Olympic city for the duration of the Games was also dismissed by Radio Moscow. Vladimir Pozner, dismissing this in his 'Daily Talk' report to North American audiences, said, 'I can hardly keep from sniggering. I mean it's all so totally ridiculous'.⁷³⁵ He went on to explain that the reports some may have read about children being removed were fundamentally inaccurate, and, in what can be considered an attempt to promote the Soviet system above that of the US, explained about children's yearly holiday camps, which took 'over 600,000' of Moscow's junior citizens.⁷³⁶ Pozner asked the listener if the Western reporters had in fact 'a list of things they are expected to say regardless of the facts', considering,

⁷³² IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 12th July 1980, 1000, no.6

⁷³³ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 19th July 1980, 1738, International Diary, no.1

⁷³⁴ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 15th July 1980, 2000, section 5.

⁷³⁵ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 18th July 1980, 2300, section 7

⁷³⁶ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 18th July 1980, 2300, section 7, p.3

'Western journalists who have been here before during the summer must know this is a regular thing, and those who have come for the first time could have checked it out if they really wanted to know'.⁷³⁷

According to Radio Moscow, the Olympics may not have been harming Muscovites, but the boycott was causing harm elsewhere. British & Irish listeners were told that the boycott showed up 'the sorry state of human rights in the USA', whilst North American and Home service listeners were informed that the *LA Times* had reported the boycott had hit US business.⁷³⁸ Home service listeners were also informed that the failure of foreign firms to supply the Games had no effect on quality, as domestic firms were perfectly capable of producing the same goods – foreign offers had been accepted to help publicise the firms, in what listeners were expected to consider a nice gesture by the Soviet Union, not a need for foreign assistance.⁷³⁹

This friendly gesture pointed towards framing Games reporting around the idea of peace and friendship. The North American service heard a commentary on the Games ability to spread exactly this,

'Many Western observers predict the 22nd Olympics will be a sport event of extraordinary significance... the ideas of peace, sport and cooperation between people and nations has more appeal than the hostility and mistrust of cold war time. We may be sure the Olympic Games in Moscow will not only provide new records; they will promote the noble ideals of a peaceful life and closer international cooperation.'⁷⁴⁰

Listeners in Asia heard the Indian basketball captain say that, 'he feels the atmosphere of friendship, rapprochement between young people and mutual understanding will have a clear ring at these Olympics.'⁷⁴¹ The French Algerian service also carried listener's letters wishing the Games success 'as a festival of sport, peace and friendship', whilst French African listeners heard an interview with a member of the Supreme Revolutionary Council of Madagascar praising the Games in Moscow as sure to 'contribute to the consolidation of peace'.⁷⁴² The African service heard that the Olympics would be 'an important contribution to strengthening friendship among peoples' – which is the opposite of the divisive and people harming frames

⁷³⁷ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 18th July 1980, 2300, section 7, p.3

⁷³⁸ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 15th July 1980, 2300, section 1.2; IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 12th July 1980, 2000, section 1.11; IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 15th July 1980, 1330, 'International Diary', no.8

⁷³⁹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 15th July 1980, 2100, no.21

⁷⁴⁰ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 18th July 1980, 0001, section 2

⁷⁴¹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Asia 18th July 1980, 1400, no.4

⁷⁴² IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Alg 16th July 1980, 2000, section 5; RM Fre Afr 18th July 1980, 1830, section 3

used to describe the US boycott actions.⁷⁴³ They were also informed about the Zimbabwean team, sending 65 team members, 'both black and white sportsmen, [who] would be happy to compete at the Games'.⁷⁴⁴ Not only would the Games bring together ideologically different groups, but also groups divided on racial grounds.

There was more praise for what the Olympics were about in broadcasts to both Western and Eastern Europe. Spanish listeners heard interviews with Juan Antonio Samaranch (Spanish ambassador to Moscow and President-elect of the International Olympic Committee), with the Secretary General of the Afghan Olympic Committee, who emphasised the importance of sport, and with the Chairman of the Laotian Olympic Committee, who expressed the view 'that the Moscow Games will show the solidarity of all [the] world's progressive forces'.⁷⁴⁵ Listeners to the Czech service heard Lord Killanin, and a listener in Martinique, talk about the peace and cooperation character of the Games.⁷⁴⁶ Listeners to the German service heard about non-Soviet reports on the Games build-up – the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* praised Moscow for being well prepared; a 'Swiss paper' was reported as commenting on the 'contribution to peace and international understanding'.⁷⁴⁷ Hungarian and Bulgarian listeners were told about teams arriving for the Games – with no hint of any boycott surrounding these reports.⁷⁴⁸

This frame continued in other regions too. Arabic audiences heard letters praising the Soviet Union and the Olympic Games, alongside one complaint from an Egyptian listener about President Sadat agreeing Egypt would join the boycott.⁷⁴⁹ This was suggestive that the Egyptian government was not acting in the interests of the Egyptian people, and if this was the case with the boycott then perhaps this was also the case with the Camp David Accords. This would also suite Radio Moscow attitudes towards the Camp David Accords. Fitting in with the peace and mutual understanding framework, Persian and Turkish listeners were told about the religious facilities available in the Olympic village.⁷⁵⁰ Directly attacking the boycott campaign had been overtaken by Radio Moscow pushing what might be described as political positives of the Olympic Games, pushing peace and understanding amongst different states and peoples.

⁷⁴³ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 15th July 1980, 1700, section 4.5; RM Eng Afr 18th July 1980, 1700, section 5

⁷⁴⁴ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 12th July 1980, 1700, section 4.3

⁷⁴⁵ IWM/SU/D/ RM Span 17th July 1980, 2200, section 4.1

⁷⁴⁶ IWM/SU/E/ RM Czech 19th July 1980, 1600, section 2

⁷⁴⁷ IWM/SU/E/ RM Ger 19th July 1980, 2000, section 2.4

⁷⁴⁸ IWM/SU/E RM Bulg 17th July 1980, 1630, section 5; RM Hung 13th July 1980, 1800, section 2.3

⁷⁴⁹ IWM/SU/F RM Arabic 13th July 1980, 1830, section 2

⁷⁵⁰ IWM/SU/F RM Persian 18th July 1980, 1800; RM Turkish 18th July 1980, 1400, section 3.2

However, in itself, this can still be considered indirect criticism of the boycott campaign, and on occasion peace and understanding was contrasted with the ‘pressure’ placed on athletes to boycott.

This frame ran alongside the quantity frame discussed in previous chapters. The World Service reported on 16th July that ‘6,000 athletes are already in Moscow’, and, on the 17th, that athletes from 74 states were already in the Olympic village.⁷⁵¹ Listeners in Britain & Ireland did not hear anything about attendance by states or athletes during this time, but French listeners were told about the prominence of sport in the Soviet Union, and Swedish listeners were told about the 6,000 athletes who had already arrived (by 16th) in Moscow – 6,000 being more than at any previous Games according to Radio Moscow.⁷⁵² The African service claimed that,

*‘athletes from 85 countries will participate. This is about the average for the previous six summer Olympics; 16 of these are countries whose athletes won the first twenty places at the Olympics in Montreal.’*⁷⁵³

The average for the past six summer Olympics was actually 95.5 teams – thus this ‘about average’ number for Moscow was out by around 11%.⁷⁵⁴ In an attempt to localise attendance at the Games, African listeners heard the continent was strong in track and field and boxing, especially the teams from Ethiopia, Uganda, and Nigeria.⁷⁵⁵ The Ndebele language listeners heard about both the Angolan and Zimbabwean teams commenting on the Games, whilst Shona language listeners specifically heard comments by Zimbabwean athletes.⁷⁵⁶ The boycott was mentioned via the African service because of Kenyan athletes missing out – Henry Rono, three-time world record setter, ‘said his dream was to win gold in Moscow. Unfortunately, he won’t be able to’.⁷⁵⁷ However, reaffirming the boycott had failed, listeners were told that, ‘the best athletes have come from a majority of countries. Only a few have fallen victim to the actions of politicians who got into line behind the Government of the United States’.⁷⁵⁸ The quantity and quality of attendees was being reused to frame the boycott as a failure. The boycott itself was

⁷⁵¹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 16th July 1980, 1000, section 1.1; RM WSE 17th July 1980, 0700, section 1.2

⁷⁵² IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre 16th July 1980, 1900; IWM/SU/D/ RM Swedish 18th July 1980, 1730, section 5

⁷⁵³ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 17th July 1980, 1700, section 5.6

⁷⁵⁴ Summer totals – Montreal ’76 - 92; Munich ’72 – 121; Mexico ’68 – 112; Tokyo ’64 – 93; Rome ’60 – 83; Melbourne ’56 – 72 Source – www.Olympic.org

⁷⁵⁵ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 17th July 1980, 1700, section 5.6

⁷⁵⁶ IWM/SU/F RM Ndebele 13th July 1980, 1630, section 2, RM Ndebele 17th July 1980, 1630, section 4; RM Shona 16th July 1980, 1600, section 3, RM Shona 13th July 1980, 1600, section 2

⁷⁵⁷ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 17th July 1980, 1700, section 5.6

⁷⁵⁸ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 17th July 1980, 1700, section 5.6

framed as the project of politicians and the US government, not a project of the people, and one that only had success with a few athletes.

How the boycott had harmed athletes was reiterated in the days before the opening ceremony. On the 14th July, Soviet listeners heard Lord Killanin express ‘hopes for the success of the Olympics’, that Moscow had received the Games ‘in connection with the fact that this city, and Soviet sportsmen, had made a great contribution to the development of sport’.⁷⁵⁹ Interwoven in this praise was also criticism of the boycott, Killanin regretting ‘that many sportsmen are unable to take part in these Games, due to political pressure...’, but the IOC President concluded with ‘gratitude to all Soviet and Moscow organisers of the Olympics’.⁷⁶⁰ On 18th July, Home service listeners heard Lord Killanin again stress ‘that Moscow had been chosen as the venue for the 22nd Olympics because of the USSR’s outstanding contribution to the development of sport and not for any political considerations’.⁷⁶¹ However, the World Service reported that the athletes from boycotting states were disappointed and depressed, US athletes were ‘apparently demoralised’, whilst a West German hammer thrower was reported as saying that ‘the boycott of the Olympics is like a lump constantly felt in the throat’.⁷⁶² North American audiences even heard that there would be a film made which would ‘probably include a story on the sportsmen’s struggle for their rights’.⁷⁶³

Both the British and Irish teams were attending, so these reports were not heard in broadcasts to the region. However, an argument that was not heard before, and really did not gain mention anywhere else, appeared as an off-the-cuff remark via the British airwaves on the 14th. ‘There was no call for a boycott of the Montreal Games despite the bombing of Vietnam’ – this statement appeared in an interview with two Scottish brothers who had cycled from Glasgow to Moscow.⁷⁶⁴ This created a direct comparison between events in Afghanistan and US actions in Vietnam and was not repeated in any other broadcast.

It was not only the technology that Radio Moscow used to promote the Games, and the Soviet Union, to the world. The facilities were also mentioned in the days before the Games opened, in some cases contrasting them with those at Lake Placid or Montreal to show Soviet ability. World Service listeners heard the IOC Director, Monique Berlioux, praising the Games in much

⁷⁵⁹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 14th July 1980, 1700, no. 1

⁷⁶⁰ Ibid

⁷⁶¹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 18th July 1980, 1200, no.14

⁷⁶² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 17th July 1980, 0700, no.2

⁷⁶³ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 19th July 1980, 0030, section 3.

⁷⁶⁴ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 14th July 1980, 2000, section 10

the same manner – ‘she is deeply impressed not only with the good organisation of the Games but also with how preparations for the IOC session were carried out’.⁷⁶⁵ There was also praise for the facilities – ‘she says she has seen the Olympic swimming pool and has seen nothing like it in her life’ – and that there was a ‘wonderful atmosphere’.⁷⁶⁶ As with the comments by Killanin though, there was some criticism of the boycott interwoven with the overwhelming praise – ‘She expresses belief that the Moscow games will contribute greatly to the development of the Olympic movement and regrets that “athletes from some countries will be unable to take part...”’.⁷⁶⁷

This frame also appeared elsewhere. British and Irish listeners heard praise for the Moscow organising committee from the French Olympic attaché, and, by the 18th, heard reports from British journalists in admiration of the Olympic village.⁷⁶⁸ Making the Olympic village ‘the best of any Olympic village so far’ were commodities such as televisions and video players, but also, to really put a scale of excellence on the village, only ‘6-8 people to an apartment unit. This compares with Montreal’s intolerable 15 to a unit’.⁷⁶⁹ The British Soviet historian, Jim Reardon, was even cited as regarding ‘the host of the Moscow Games as having done everything to enable the competitors to show their best results’.⁷⁷⁰ Radio Moscow was weaving criticism of North American Games’ in amongst praise for the Moscow Olympiad, effectively contrasting the two cold war adversaries by comparing Olympics. In this instance, Canadian Montreal bore the brunt of the criticism, though more usually, as seen in chapter five, the Lake Placid Games, and therefore the US as hosts of the 1980 Winter Olympics, were the ones being criticised.

Lake Placid was lambasted in broadcasts to North America, with Radio Moscow commenting that ‘virtually nothing had been done for newsmen and their work’, a part of the ‘organisational shortcomings’ of the Games.⁷⁷¹ This commentary, on 12th July, including a rare analysis of the Soviet defeat to the US at ice hockey in the 1980 Winter Games (the ‘miracle on ice’), preceded the more common praise for the organisation and facilities of the Moscow Games. By the 16th, Radio Moscow’s North American service was in line with its other services, publicising praise

⁷⁶⁵ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 14th July 1980, 1300, section 2.5

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid

⁷⁶⁸ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 16th July 1980, 2000, section 1.2; RM GBI 18th July 1980, 2000, section 9

⁷⁶⁹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 18th July 1980, 2000, section 9

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷⁷¹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 12th July 1980, 2300, section 8

for the facilities from foreign sports delegations.⁷⁷² On the 17th, listeners were told Moscow was ready for the Games, and by the 19th that Aeroflot, the Soviet airline, was putting on extra flights due to the Olympics.⁷⁷³ Linking back to supposed lies in the foreign press, on the 19th July Radio Moscow was also ridiculing stories North American listeners may have seen in the media about security issues surrounding the Games.⁷⁷⁴ Pozner, the commentator, claimed that ‘what really keeps astonishing me is the way most of the Western media reports are out and out lies’.⁷⁷⁵ This criticism of foreign media lies was linked in with praise for the facilities Moscow was providing for journalists – ‘huge TV screens...for watching different events simultaneously’.⁷⁷⁶ Therefore, with these facilities available, why did the foreign press have to print ‘false things’?⁷⁷⁷ Radio Moscow was trying to undermine claims listeners may have heard in the foreign media with examples that highlighted Soviet superiority – as if the provision of huge television screens was proof that claimed security issues were clearly imagined.

Promotion of the facilities, and praise from foreign dignitaries, athletes and spectators, is not something that was solely restricted to the Moscow Games; it makes up a sizable amount of the media coverage and self-promotion in any Olympics. However, what can be seen in the Radio Moscow broadcasting is that it was also used as a means to attack previous Olympics, to dispel myths in the foreign press, and in many ways was promoting the Soviet system. This was the first international sporting event on this scale to be held in the Soviet bloc, and, as such, it was hardly surprising that they praised everything from the televisions, videos and spaciousness of the Olympic village, through to the state of the art media centre. Framing the boycott campaign around harming the athlete, and other broadcasts about the boycott campaign itself had taken a backseat, there was now an emphasis on the technology and facilities on offer at Moscow. Framing the Games in this positive manner, Radio Moscow had effectively ignored the boycott campaign, with it only very rarely gaining mention amongst the praise for Moscow.

⁷⁷² IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 16th July 1980, 2300, section 1.1

⁷⁷³ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 17th July 1980, 2300, section 1.1; RM N.Am 19th July 1980, 2300, section 6

⁷⁷⁴ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 19th July 1980, 2300, section 6

⁷⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid

9.2 THE GAMES BEGIN!

On the 19th July 1980, the Moscow Games officially opened. Radio Moscow described the event in the Central Lenin Stadium, ‘where 100,000 people are awaiting the opening’, in minute-by-minute detail.⁷⁷⁸ Amongst the pageantry were allusions to and attacks on the boycotting states – at 1315 (GMT) with the arrival of the Afghan team into the arena, Radio Moscow reported that, ‘The President of the Afghan NOC speaks at the microphone, expressing delight with the opening of the Games; Western attempts to undermine the Games, he says, have ended in failure’.⁷⁷⁹ There were no mentions of those not attending, or of the weakened teams representing some states, or of representation by national Olympic committees, and not states, in some instances. The IOC chairman, Lord Killanin, spoke briefly of the boycott –

*‘I welcome all the athletes and officials here today, especially those who demonstrated their complete independence to travel to compete, despite many pressures placed on them... I must repeat that these Games belong to the International Olympic Committee and are allocated purely on the ability of the host city to organise them. I ask you all to compete in a true spirit of mutual understanding, above all differences of politics, religion or race, in the wonderful facilities provided here’.*⁷⁸⁰

After the opening ceremony ended, the BBC Monitors recording the event noted that,

*‘Throughout this three and a half hour reportage, no mention was made of the presence of a British delegation, or of the absence of any delegation. The only mention of adverse reaction to the Olympics in the West came in the brief interview early in the reportage with the Afghan representative and in Killanin’s speech. The announcers commented only on the magnificence of the occasion’.*⁷⁸¹

Whilst this was true about the opening ceremony, in the days that followed Radio Moscow did not shy away from mentioning negative coverage of the Games, or the restrictions placed by foreign states on some athletes and spectators trying to attend. Even the lack of certain flags was mentioned. However, these tended to come up in interviews with athletes or spectators, and the

⁷⁷⁸ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 19th July 1980, 1245, ‘Reportage on opening of 1980 Olympic Games’, 1246

⁷⁷⁹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 19th July 1980, 1245, ‘Reportage on opening of 1980 Olympic Games’, p.2, 1315

⁷⁸⁰ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 19th July 1980, 1245, ‘Reportage on opening of 1980 Olympic Games’, p.5, 1417.

⁷⁸¹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 19th July 1980, 1245, ‘Reportage on opening of 1980 Olympic Games’, p.7

word boycott was not prominent – there was perhaps an attempt to suggest that a few states here and there were not attending, not an organised mass. There was far more reporting of praise for the Games, the athletes, and the events though.

On the 20th July, Home service audiences heard acclaim for the opening ceremony and sports facilities from Presidents of various delegations.⁷⁸² Following this was comment on the boycott, but as was usual for Radio Moscow at this time, the criticism came from foreign voices – in this instance the ‘Vice-President of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship’.⁷⁸³ He was reported to have claimed ‘the peoples of the whole world, including Americans, support the Olympic movement... The majority of Americans are not in agreement with the Olympic boycott policy which the Washington Administration attempted to foist’.⁷⁸⁴ This comment on the boycott, suggesting failure through the phrase ‘attempted to foist’, also included lauding of the facilities and a hope that the Games will be the best and most successful, was hardly a commentary focused solely on the negatives of the boycott campaign – although it did fit with how the boycott had been framed previously, as a policy that put governments against people.⁷⁸⁵

On the 21st, the editor of the French sports paper *L'Equipe* was cited as praising the opening ceremony, ‘a great success’, a Polish cycling official praised the organisation of the cycling as ‘exemplary’, a Tanzanian official thanked the Soviet Union for help given to his team, and the Executive-Director of the Spain-USSR Association also praised the Games, noting ‘everything is excellently organised’.⁷⁸⁶ On the 23rd, the head of the Jordanian Olympic delegation ‘expressed his delight at the organisation of the Games... and his gratitude for the conditions provided for the Jordanian sportsmen and officials’.⁷⁸⁷ Soviet listeners heard on the 24th, via *Pravda Review*, how foreign participants in the Games had described Moscow fans as fine judges of sport, and then, on the 25th, not only was there praise for the organisation of the Games, but for the tidiness of Moscow and the low pollution levels, compared to other cities around the world such as London and New York.⁷⁸⁸ Again, Radio Moscow was reporting praise from foreign delegations and specific visitors, the quotes were not coming from Soviet citizens. The acclaim continued unabated over the following days, Radio Moscow informing listeners of

⁷⁸² IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 20th July 1980, 1330, no.1

⁷⁸³ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 20th July 1980, 1330, no.2

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid

⁷⁸⁶ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 21st July 1980, 0700, no.1; and, 1700, section 1.

⁷⁸⁷ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 23rd July 1980, 0001, no.9

⁷⁸⁸ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 24th July 1980, 2100, no.12; 25th July 1980, 1030, no.6

the positive experiences of athletes from Australia, Poland, Lebanon and France.⁷⁸⁹ As with before the opening ceremony, Radio Moscow was concentrating on reporting praise for the facilities the Soviet Union had provided for the Games, rather than continue criticism of the boycott campaign itself.

The World Service heard more mention of politics in amongst the praise for the opening ceremony, the facilities, and the organisation of the Games.⁷⁹⁰ The head of the British Olympic Association was amongst those the World Service reported as praising the Games – ‘...they’re excellent... very homely...’ – but he also alluded to the boycott campaign in Britain –

*‘there was very little real delay in England because we took the decision [to attend] very early. In point of fact we had taken the decision in September, 1978, but in the ultimate it was for the individual to decide whether he or she wanted to come here’.*⁷⁹¹

There was no mention of the British Olympic Association vote in March under considerable government pressure in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Following this was an interview with the Vice-President of the International Union of Students, a Ghanaian who was disappointed that his team would not be at the Games.⁷⁹² Far more focused on the boycott than any other interviews, it accused the Ghanaian government of being a puppet for the US, without mentioning why the US had pushed for a boycott, whilst also continuing to praise the effort and organisation put into the Moscow Olympiad.⁷⁹³

The ‘Olympic Report’ of 21st July claimed the opening ceremony had ‘...left an indelible imprint on virtually everyone who saw it’.⁷⁹⁴ As with broadcasts to Home service listeners, reporting after the ceremony concentrated on telling listeners all about the positive comments made by foreign journalists, audiences, and athletes. Listeners heard claims such as ‘I think it was a fantastic performance... it was one of the best opening ceremonies... it was a grandiose spectacle, colourful, never to be forgotten... the wonderful spirit of cooperation and peace that was so evident’.⁷⁹⁵ On the 22nd, Yasser Arafat was quoted also praising the Games –

⁷⁸⁹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 26th July 1980, 0905; 27th July 1980, 2030.

⁷⁹⁰ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 19th July 1980, 1500, section 1.1

⁷⁹¹ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 20th July 1980, 1500, section 1, p.3

⁷⁹² IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 20th July 1980, 1500, section 2, p.4

⁷⁹³ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 20th July 1980, 1500, section 2, p.4-5

⁷⁹⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 21st July 1980, 1100, section 2, ‘Olympic Report’

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid

'The opening ceremony of the 1980 Olympic Games was a grandiose demonstration of sports and art combined... I would also like to note the Olympic village – an outstanding village of sports and joy, a really unique place'.⁷⁹⁶

This interview was swiftly followed by further praise for Olympic facilities, this time for the swimming pool from a member of the Dutch Olympic team.⁷⁹⁷ Even including a brief mention of the boycott campaign in Holland, although using the phrase 'certain difficulties' and not the term 'boycott', the Dutch interviewee explained that '...the Olympics in particular help to cement friendship and cooperation...'.⁷⁹⁸ The Games were being framed around the ideas of friendship and peace, the opposite of how the boycott campaign was portrayed, whilst again highlighting the Soviet facilities. The Lake Placid Games were also reported in this way, as an event that spread peace and cooperation, and the facilities were also highlighted, but whereas Soviet facilities garnered praise, the New York facilities were condemned. However, the sanctity of the Olympics remained.

There can be no doubt that Radio Moscow was determined to put across the opinion that the Moscow Games were well organised and technically impressive. There was an element of localisation with this praise. British & Irish listeners heard comments made by two Scottish brothers, an interview with a BBC London correspondent, praise for the swimming facilities from the former British swimmer David Wilkie, and a favourable comparison with Montreal from another British Olympic swimmer.⁷⁹⁹ Asian audiences heard only the briefest of praise for the Games, from a local source – on the 24th July hearing about Indian praise for the opening ceremony: 'Head of Indian parliamentary delegation visiting Moscow said it was hard to find words to describe the opening ceremony...'.⁸⁰⁰ African service listeners received broadcasts more like those to Britain and the World Service, with far more comment from different groups praising the Games. These ranged from statements such as, 'Yesterday's opening ceremony has been called the finest in Olympic history', and, 'high praise is given by journalists from Finland, Australia, India, Switzerland and Mexico', through to support from the aforementioned praise from David Wilkie, from Sebastian Coe, and finally from African states such as the Seychelles

⁷⁹⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd July 1980, 1100, section 2.b

⁷⁹⁷ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd July 1980, 1100, section 2.c

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹⁹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 20th July 1980, 2000, section 3.3 and, section 3.2 [repeat of RM Eng Afr 20th July 1980, 1700, section 3.3], 21st July 1980, 2000, section 1.1 and section 3

⁸⁰⁰ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Asia 24th July 1980, 1400, section 1.3;

and Nigeria.⁸⁰¹ Portuguese and French language African broadcasts also heard praise – in the Portuguese broadcasts praise for the facilities came from both the British swimmer David Wilkie, the head of the Tanzanian delegation, and an unnamed ‘sports observer’ – the latter claiming ‘the excellence of the sports facilities is conducive to record-breaking exploits in the current Olympic Games’.⁸⁰² French language listeners heard a Mozambique swimmer and a Senegalese basketball coach, again, both full of praise.⁸⁰³ This localisation of the praise contrasted with the comments from boycott supporters who were either from local ‘pariah’ states, or from states far removed from the target audience, either ideologically or geographically.

Localisation of praise also occurred in Europe. Listeners in France heard Radio Moscow cite the French press and other European bodies for examples of praise for the Games –

*‘the Soviet Union, writes the special correspondent of ‘Le Matin’, has made enormous efforts... the chairman of the European Sports Press Association said... the inauguration of the Games conferred on the entire Olympics a radiant atmosphere, enthusiasm shared by guests and participants’.*⁸⁰⁴

Radio Moscow’s Spanish audience were told that interest in the Games was ‘intense’, that the foreign media ‘enthuses’ over the Olympics, and, in an implicit attack on the boycotters, that participation in the Games showed support for the Olympic ideals.⁸⁰⁵ Greek listeners heard an interview with the head of the Greek delegation, who claimed that the ‘best facilities have been made available... food is very good, similar to Cypriot food... Moscow and its people are excellent...’.⁸⁰⁶ A Swedish author was heard via the Swedish service giving his ‘positive opinions concerning the organisation of the Moscow Olympics’, a Portuguese team representative gave his ‘favourable impressions of the atmosphere in the Olympic village...’, and an Italian newspaper director was heard via the Italian service, ‘expressing his admiration for the work put into the preparations for the Games...’.⁸⁰⁷ These reports were as much to frame

⁸⁰¹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 20th July 1980, 1700, section 1 and 3.3; 21st July 1980, 2000, section 1.1, 21st July 1980, 1700, section 1.2; 24th July 1980, 1700, sections 5 and 6, p.5; 25th July 1980, 2000, section 4

⁸⁰² IWM/SU/D/ RM Port Afr 21st July 1980, 2030, section 1.1; 26th July 1980, 2030, section 1.11

⁸⁰³ IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Afr 23rd July 1980, 1700, section 3

⁸⁰⁴ IWM/SU/D/ RM Fre Eur 23rd July 1980, 1730, section 2.5

⁸⁰⁵ IWM/SU/D/ RM Spain 25th July 1980, 2200, section 2.1; RM Spain 22nd July 1980, 2200, section 4.2; RM Spain 22nd July 1980, 2200, section 3.1

⁸⁰⁶ IWM/SU/D/ RM Greek 20th July 1980, 1900, section 2b

⁸⁰⁷ IWM/SU/D/ RM Swedish 25th July 1980, 1900, section 2.3; RM Portuguese Europe 24th July 1980, 1900, section 2.3; RM Italian 22nd July 1980, 1730, section 2.4

the Olympic Games positively as they were to frame the Soviet Union. After all, it was the Soviet Union that supplied the facilities for the Games, and these reports, alongside the reporting of the technology available for reporters, heaped praise on the Soviet Union.

Eastern European broadcasts also heard reports on the Games from local commentators. Bulgarian listeners heard a regionalised approach, with comment by a Yugoslavian coach and praise for the friendship the Games bring from a Latvian Chess grandmaster and a Russian ballet dancer.⁸⁰⁸ Finnish listeners heard praise for the Games ‘magnificent sports premises’ from a Finnish trade union group, listeners to the German service heard praise from the chairman of the Austrian Communist Party and Hungarian listeners heard praise from a Hungarian gymnast.⁸⁰⁹ Czech service listeners also heard praise from the chairman of the Czechoslovakian National Olympic Committee, however this was more focused on the failure of the boycott campaign –

*‘We are first and foremost pleased that the attempts to boycott the Olympic Games, conducted most of all by Carter and the American administration, have failed and the progressive forces in the Olympic movement have prevailed...’*⁸¹⁰

This statement effectively framed the boycott campaign in ideological terms. As the Soviet Union liked to view itself as progressive against a reactive west, claiming that the ‘progressive forces in the Olympic movement have prevailed’ suggests a Soviet victory, and suggests an Olympic movement far more political than it claimed to be. As a statement it does not acknowledge that many refused to boycott over sporting, rather than political, principles.

Even languages such as Arabic stuck to the localisation frame, citing local or regional leaders and states to create a picture of localised support for the Olympic Games, and, on occasion, local disregard for the boycott campaign. One interviewee claimed ‘the games allow youth from over the world to compete and establish friendships... he was impressed by the Moscow sights he had seen.’⁸¹¹ A Kuwaiti Olympic official said the opening ceremony was ‘impressive’ with a large number of participants, both showing the boycott had failed.⁸¹² Yasser Arafat was also quoted in depth on the Arabic service, again praising the organisation and facilities – apparently

⁸⁰⁸ IWM/SU/E/ RM Bulgarian 22nd July 1980, 1630, sections 7; RM Bulgarian 21st July 1980, 1630, section 2

⁸⁰⁹ IWM/SU/E/ RM Finnish 23rd July 1980, 1630, section 1.2; RM German 21st July 1980, 2000, section 1.4; RM Hungarian 25th July 1980, 1800, section 2.2

⁸¹⁰ IWM/SU/E/ RM Czech 21st July 1980, 1730, section 3

⁸¹¹ IWM/SU/F/RM Arabic 25th July 1980, 1500, section 3

⁸¹² IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 24th July 1980, 1500, section 1.1

pointing out that it was important that the facilities would eventually be available for the working people.⁸¹³ He also called the ‘Olympic session in Moscow [a] fete of peace and solidarity among the people of the globe’ and strongly condemned the boycott.⁸¹⁴ Not only was praise for the Games localised through quoting high profile figures close to a state or region, but criticism of the boycott was also framed in this manner.

The exception to this appears to have been North America. Only on 22nd July was there a brief roundup of comment and praise from others.⁸¹⁵ Instead, Games commentary concentrated on the quality of the Games themselves, what the US team were missing out on, and more general criticism of the restrictive coverage of the Olympics.⁸¹⁶ Home service listeners also heard reports that framed foreign press coverage in this manner. Amongst reports about the wide coverage of the Games, and how ‘all events in the world have been pushed into the background by the opening of the 22nd Olympic Games in Moscow,’ were reports about restrictive media coverage abroad.⁸¹⁷ There were no examples of this restrictive coverage, but listeners heard that, for example, the FRG public were ‘indignant’ over the restrictive coverage, and ‘Americans enjoy what little of the Olympics they have been allowed to see on TV’.⁸¹⁸ Additionally, they heard French complaints over the lack of a French flag at the Olympics –

*‘Over 300 French tourists in Moscow have sent President Giscard d’Estaing a protest in connection with the absence of the country’s national flag and team from the ceremony of the opening of the Olympiad. Their letter handed to the French Embassy in the USSR assesses this as a betrayal of the Olympic ideals of Pierre de Coubertin’.*⁸¹⁹

The reporting was framed by these comments, giving the impression of a general public desiring to see the Games, and of government and media actively trying to prevent them. Radio Moscow again created two levels within a state – the people, supportive of peace and freedoms, and the government and media, who seemed to be in a permanent state of conflict, or desiring of one.

⁸¹³ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 20th July 1980, 1500, section 1.2

⁸¹⁴ Ibid

⁸¹⁵ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 22nd July 1980, 2300, section 8

⁸¹⁶ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 23rd July 1980, 2300, section 6; 26th July 1980, 2300, section 8; 25th July 1980, 2300, section 1.2 and 0001, section 3

⁸¹⁷ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 20th July 1980, 1730, no.1

⁸¹⁸ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 25th July 1980, 1900, no.15; IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 21st July 1980, 1600, no.12

⁸¹⁹ IWM/SU/B/535 23rd July 1980, 1300, no.7

Previously, the Britain & Ireland service had also attacked the reporting of the ITV correspondent Martin Lewis and the BBC's Christopher Morris.⁸²⁰ Both, in claiming that members of the Afghan team wanted to defect to Pakistan and were worried about going back home after the Games, had nasty cases of 'Afghanistanitis' according to the Radio Moscow correspondent.⁸²¹ More to the point, this discussion of how these British journalists were reporting the Afghan Olympic team was used as, in the words of the commentator, an 'indication of the quality of the Olympic reports audiences in the West are going to be treated to'.⁸²² Rather than talk about the Afghan team, Radio Moscow was reporting what it claimed were distortions about the team and was projecting the reporting as potentially typical of the coverage British & Irish viewers could expect from their correspondents in Moscow.

Attacking American journalists, the Home service claimed there were no truths in any of the rumours about Afghan delegates intending to quit the Games ('someone's groundless, malicious fantasies').⁸²³ The World Service, and broadcasts to Eastern Europe, reported that the Afghan athletes themselves had refuted allegations claiming they wanted to emigrate to the West – but this was not reported to those listening to the Britain & Ireland or North American services.⁸²⁴

There were further examples of foreign press restrictions and disruption. Soviet listeners heard that one British newspaper, *The Daily Mail*, 'almost openly incited the staging of terrorist actions during the Olympic competitions...'.⁸²⁵ This was not broadcast elsewhere over the Radio Moscow international network. Other examples used to frame Western media reporting as distorted did appear elsewhere though. The World Service told listeners that US correspondents had been given instructions making clear,

*'the need for reports that the press and government in the countries boycotting the Olympics are ignoring it, and that interest in the games is declining because of the absence of athletes from these countries'.*⁸²⁶

⁸²⁰ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 16th July 1980, 2000, section 6

⁸²¹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 16th July 1980, 2000, section 6, p.2

⁸²² IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 16th July 1980, 2000, section 6, p.2-3

⁸²³ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 21st July 1980, 1600, no.10

⁸²⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 22nd July 1980, 0700, section 1.3. Two Eastern Europe examples are Finnish (IWM/SU/E/ RM Finn 22nd July 1980, 1630, section 1.4), and German (IWM/SU/E/ RM German 21st July 1980, 2000, section 1.5)

⁸²⁵ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 23rd July 1980, 1830, no.5

⁸²⁶ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 25th July 1980, 1400, section 1.1

African listeners heard *L'Humanite* had reported that 'French radio and TV censored coverage of the Olympic opening ceremony: full coverage would have shown the failure of the anti-Olympic campaign in France'.⁸²⁷ Listeners in mainland Europe heard much the same; it seems criticism of the reporting of the Games was a priority for Radio Moscow at this time, as this excerpt from the Arabic service shows –

*'There is not a single newspaper, radio or TV in the world today which does not cover the Moscow Olympic Games. But amidst this orchestra of praise and commendation, a shaky frivolousness is but natural since the Olympic boycott movement has dramatically failed...'*⁸²⁸

There was no difference in this line of argument in broadcasts to Britain & Ireland or North America. Listeners to the British & Irish service heard that, 'despite all the attempts of the Carter administration to discredit the Olympics in Moscow and belittle their sports significance the Games are evoking large-scale interest in all countries'.⁸²⁹ Within this phrase it is worth noting the focus is on the idea that President Carter was apparently attempting to discredit and belittle the 'sporting significance' of the Games, there was not a hint of any other reason for non-attendance. Interestingly, unlike previous broadcasts to Britain, this one attacked President Carter for the boycott campaign, not Margaret Thatcher. It is also another example of how Radio Moscow framed interest in the Games – the people wanted to see it, but governments and media were colluding to try and prevent this. North American service listeners heard a similar argument put to them – on 22nd July, listeners heard that whilst the view of the *Chicago Tribune* and other 'leading American newspapers' was that 'attempts by the Carter Administration to stage a boycott of the Olympic Games in Moscow had been a total failure', some were still pursuing an 'anti-Olympic campaign...clearly slanted in nature'.⁸³⁰ The boycott had failed, but governments and media were still trying to prevent the people from having access to the Games.

In an attempt to counter this, Radio Moscow informed its listeners about those attending the Games, about the quality of the athletes and about the avalanche of world records being set. Listeners in North America heard about the 'Niagara Falls of records in just the first three days...', an argument that fitted the framing of the boycott as doomed to failure because it

⁸²⁷ IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Afr 22nd July 1980, 1700, section 1.4

⁸²⁸ IWM/SU/F/ RM Arabic 22nd July 1980, 1530, section 1.4

⁸²⁹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 21st July 1980, 2000, section 1.2

⁸³⁰ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 22nd July 1980, 0001, section 2

would not affect the quality of the Games.⁸³¹ A comparison with Montreal was made a few days later – ‘there is a feeling that competitors have trained better for these Games than for those at Montreal’.⁸³² Furthermore, listeners heard that nearly 3 million spectators had attended by the 26th July.⁸³³ Radio Moscow was framing the Games as a success through reporting the quantity of viewers and the quality of the athletes in attendance. These did not directly attack the boycott campaign, but they clearly fitted the framework portraying it as a failure. Straight to the point, listeners in Britain and Ireland heard ‘the Olympic flame has put out the boycott’, and the Games were ‘evoking large-scale interest in all countries’.⁸³⁴ The problems Radio Moscow were trying to make clear though, were that this large-scale interest was being hampered by foreign governments and media trying to restrict coverage, not only because the boycott campaign had failed, but also because they did not want the public to be aware of the impressive technology and facilities available in Moscow. There was no mention of the effect the invasion of Afghanistan had on this sporting event.

9.3 REPORTING AFGHANISTAN

In the background to the Olympic pageantry, Radio Moscow continued to report events in Afghanistan. The framing of these reports remained consistent with previous months; the Soviet broadcaster was telling the world that all was well in Afghanistan, the intervention was welcomed by the Afghan people, and any reports that said otherwise were false. There was persistent coverage of misleading foreign press reports and Western lies, and, somewhat contradicting each other, reports that Afghanistan was stable and making statements on the world stage whilst the West was supplying arms into Afghanistan and militarising the whole region.

The Home service persisted in telling listeners about the different countries supplying arms to the Afghan ‘counter-revolutionaries’, from on the 13th July that Pakistan was expanding its military aid, through to the 27th, citing the British *Sunday Telegraph* as a source, that British arms were travelling to Afghanistan through intermediaries.⁸³⁵ However, within this period, it was the United States, and the CIA, who were accused most often of supplying arms into

⁸³¹ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 23rd July 1980, 2300, section 6

⁸³² IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 26th July 1980, 2300, section 1.1

⁸³³ Ibid

⁸³⁴ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 21st July 1980, 2000, section 1.2

⁸³⁵ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 13th July 1980, 2050, no.12; 27th July 1980, 1900, no.13

Afghanistan.⁸³⁶ These reports fitted within the frame of foreign involvement in regional militarisation, providing yet more justification for Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. The US magazine *Counterspy* reported on CIA involvement in Afghanistan, accusing the CIA of ‘organising training of terrorist bands in Pakistan’, so Radio Moscow used it as a source for one of its own bulletins.⁸³⁷ Home service listeners heard Indira Gandhi, the Indian Premier, express concern over Pakistan’s militaristic policies, and *The New York Times* was cited in a report about the United States continuing to arm ‘mercenaries’ in Pakistan for action in Afghanistan.⁸³⁸

It was not just Pakistan that was host to the counter-revolutionary militants, Iran also had anti-Afghan bases, according to a TASS report repeated by the Home service.⁸³⁹ However, pushing the emphasis for militarisation back to Pakistan, on 20th July, it was reported that in Iran, ‘an Afghan counter-revolutionary organisation has been placed under a ban’ – nothing like this was reported about Pakistan.⁸⁴⁰ China was also reported as stepping up supplies to Afghan anti-revolutionaries, with assistance from Pakistan.⁸⁴¹ Radio Moscow reported that there were, according to *The New York Times*, about 80 camps in Pakistan for training ‘anti-Afghan bandit formations... these bands receive money and arms directly from the United States of America’.⁸⁴² The Pakistan press was also reported as sharply stepping up ‘anti-Afghan and anti-Soviet propaganda’.⁸⁴³ This was a rare example of Radio Moscow reporting ‘anti-Soviet’, rather than just ‘anti-Afghan’, propaganda surrounding Afghanistan.

The English language World Service carried reports framing events in Afghanistan in a similar fashion – Pakistan was the bridgehead, the US and the CIA the funding bodies – with the addition of some criticism of NATO interference in Asia and an attack on the hypocrisy of the United States.⁸⁴⁴ The North American service also carried claims made by Pashtun chiefs that if

⁸³⁶ For example, IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 25th July 1980, 2045 and 1900, 24th July 1980, 2100, 23rd July 1980, 2340, 21st July 1980, 2100; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 26th July 1980, 1600, 23rd July 1980, 1400, 18th July 1980, 1700; IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 25th July 1980, 2000, 20th July 1980, 2000, 18th July 1980, 2000; IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 25th July 1980, 2300, 20th July 1980, 2300, 13th July 1980, 0001; IWM/SU/C/221 RM Eng Asia 21st July 1980, 1400, 19th July 1980, 1400, 15th July 1980, 1400; IWM/SU/C/221 Eng Afr 26th July 1980 1700, 21st July 1980, 2000.

⁸³⁷ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 18th July 1980, 1745, no.9

⁸³⁸ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 20th July 1980, 1600, no.10; 21st July 1980, 0500, no.12

⁸³⁹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 18th July 1980, 1900, no.6

⁸⁴⁰ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 20th July 1980, 0930, no.3

⁸⁴¹ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 14th July 1980, 2300, ‘International Diary’, no.6

⁸⁴² IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 21st July 1980, 1945, no.5

⁸⁴³ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 22nd July 1980, 1900, no.7.d

⁸⁴⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 14th July 1980, 2100, 23rd July 1980, 1400, section 1.6; 16th July 1980,

the Soviet Union's 'response to requests for help had been three days late then the USA and Pakistan would have mounted aggression against Afghanistan'.⁸⁴⁵ Not only did this accuse the USA of long-term aggression in Afghanistan, but it was a way of reinforcing in the mind of the listener the idea that the Afghan leadership had 'requested' Soviet assistance. This assistance was required, 'as a result of the undeclared war by the United States from the territory of Pakistan'.⁸⁴⁶

Again, the role Pakistan played in these assaults on Afghanistan was played down in Arabic language broadcasts, surely due to religious considerations. Instead, it was the United States imperialists and Chinese hegemonists,

*'against Arab and Muslim peoples. It is known that Peking fully supports the US subversive activities against [the] regime in Iran and both China and USA waged undeclared war against Afghanistan'.*⁸⁴⁷

Alongside this lack of criticism of Pakistan were stories about religious tolerance in the Soviet Union – how Muslims had freedom to worship – or about the role Israel or 'Zionism' was playing in world intrigues at this time.⁸⁴⁸ The situation was again being framed carefully to avoid any overtones that might link the intervention in Afghanistan with conflict with Islam.

Reports that portrayed the situation in Afghanistan in a way that conflicted with the official Soviet line continued to be framed in reports as lies or deception. Arabic and Turkish listeners were told that 'the more the situation is normalised the greater is the frenzy of US propaganda to turn facts upside down'.⁸⁴⁹ The view was put to listeners that the negative news they may have heard was a distortion of reality –

'Reports of thousands of villages destroyed are 100% fabrication... Any fighting is due to the aiding and abetting from abroad. Carter and Hua discussed this in Tokyo. They do not want to reconcile themselves to the loss of this important support point after the loss

IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 16th July 1980, 0600, section 2.1; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 17th July 1980, 0600, section 2.1. RM WSE 16th July 1980, 0600, section 2.1; RM WSE 17th July 1980, 0600, section 2.1

⁸⁴⁵ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 17th July 1980, 2300, section 1.3

⁸⁴⁶ IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 13th July 1980, 2300, section 3, 'Moscow Mailbag', p.6

⁸⁴⁷ IWM/SU/F RM Arabic 18th July 1980, 1530, section 2

⁸⁴⁸ IWM/SU/F RM Arabic 17th July 1980, 1730, section 4, 23rd July 1980, 1530, section 1.d

⁸⁴⁹ IWM/SU/F RM Arabic 16th July 1980, 1730, section 2.1; RM Turk 16th July 1980, 1400, section 5

*of Iran and they are trying to prevent the normalisation of the situation in Afghanistan with all their power’.*⁸⁵⁰

The day before this commentary appeared over the airwaves, the broadcaster was telling listeners worldwide that ‘TASS has refuted allegations by US news agencies re – military operation near Kabul’, ‘TASS denies US press reports of massacres in Afghanistan’ or, ‘TASS denies reports by American news agencies about the killing of thousands of people and the destruction of villages in Afghanistan’.⁸⁵¹ Radio Moscow told Soviet listeners, North American listeners, British & Irish listeners, even World Service listeners, that TASS had denied the killings and destruction claimed by United Press International (UPI) and Associated Press (AP).⁸⁵² These were evidently important enough claims to need refuting across the network – they needed to tell the world that, in keeping with other Western broadcasts that differed from Soviet sources in their portrayal of the situation in Afghanistan, these were lies.

Contrasting the ‘lies’ of the foreign press, listeners also heard about Afghan stability and steps on the international stage. These ranged from citing statements made by the Soviet installed Afghan Premier Babrak Karmal, claiming Afghanistan was ‘a stable state, supported by the mass of the people’, through to statements that the Afghan army, ‘the popular armed forces’, were ‘eliminating bandit formations of foreign mercenaries one after the other’.⁸⁵³ The Afghan government was in control. World Service listeners were told that the Afghan Central Committee had discussed ‘measures to step up the struggle against the counter-revolutionaries’, and that,

*‘The situation in Afghanistan has improved considerably since large bands of mercenaries have been put out of action... the emergence of a united national patriotic front shows that the people are determined... [to stamp out the entire counter-revolutionary movement and save the freedom and independence of their country]’.*⁸⁵⁴

⁸⁵⁰ IWM/SU/F RM Turk 16th July 1980, 1400, section 5

⁸⁵¹ IWM/SU/F RM Arabic 15th July 1980, 1500, section 2.2; IWM/SU/F RM Somali 15th July 1980, 1500, section 1.4; IWM/SU/D/ RM Swede 15th July 1980, 1900, section 1.5. Variations also appeared in, amongst others, Italian, (15th July 1980, 1730, 1.3), Hungarian (15th July 1980, 1800, 1.5), and French for Europe (15th July 1980, 1730, 1.2)

⁸⁵² IWM/SU/B/535 15th July 1980, 1600, no.12; IWM/SU/C/221 RM N.Am 15th July 1980, 2300, section 1.7; IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 15th July 1980, 2000, section 1.5; IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 15th July 1980, 2100, section 1.5

⁸⁵³ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 13th July 1980, 0500, section 1.12; RM Home 23rd July 1980, 2100, no.9

⁸⁵⁴ IWM/SU/C/ RM WSE 24th July 1980, 1400, section 2.3.

Fitting the frame of harming innocent people, British & Irish listeners heard the words of a Soviet historian, Vladimir Iordanskiy [BBC Monitoring phonetic spelling], criticising the 'bandits' for attacking progressive women, destroying schools, and disrupting the economy.⁸⁵⁵ Not that this would have been reported in the foreign press - 'Western news media make no mention of the crimes of the bandits... If they did the world community would see that the so-called defenders of Islam are doing anything but defending Islam'.⁸⁵⁶ Once again, reporting of the situation was being framed in a manner that tried to move away from the opinion that the Soviet Union might be involved in a war around religion, and suggested that US funding was going to groups who were directly harming innocent people. The commentary went on to explain how, 'in many villages, provincial centres and larger cities, volunteers have formed armed gangs to protect public property'.⁸⁵⁷ The Afghan people themselves were fighting back. Listeners heard in conclusion that,

*'The Government of Babrak Karmal has set the goal of giving the Afghan people peace and prosperity. The bands that Washington and Peking are sending in to Afghanistan are trying to make this impossible'.*⁸⁵⁸

Unlike in broadcasts to the Soviet Union, and even those via the World Service, this did not paint a picture of a peaceful neighbourhood. Whilst dismissing claims of destruction and murder made by the Western press, Radio Moscow was reporting its own stories of destruction and murder, albeit this time involving those it claimed were funded by the United States, Britain, and various other anti-Soviet groups. It may have been framing events as improving, but there was always a background of tension – which was needed to help continue to justify the Soviet involvement in the region.

9.4 SUMMARY

The link that President Carter had made between the Olympics and Afghanistan was barely mentioned by Radio Moscow six months later, with only the interview with the Afghan NOC President briefly bringing this to attention. It had divided the two, and reporting was taking two very different paths - the Afghan situation was improving, the boycott campaign was failing. The success Jimmy Carter could claim though was that whilst the Olympic Games clearly

⁸⁵⁵ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 22nd July 1980, 2000, section 6

⁸⁵⁶ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 22nd July 1980, 2000, section 6, p.4

⁸⁵⁷ Ibid

⁸⁵⁸ IWM/SU/C/221 RM GBI 22nd July 1980, 2000, section 6, p.4-5

dominated the broadcasting at this time, there was a constant undertone that worked every message to show how the boycott campaign had failed – which is perhaps evidence that it achieved something.

Reporting on Afghanistan continued to frame the situation as one the government was in control of, and that the people were also working for the same goal as the government – to defeat the foreign-backed insurgents. As with previous chapters, there was an underlying theme in some broadcasts that tried to remove religion from the conflict, or tried to frame the US as the aggressor against Islam elsewhere. In a similar fashion to foreign coverage of the Olympics, anything that could be deemed critical of the situation in Afghanistan was reported as lies or deception by Radio Moscow. Reporting was strangely stagnant though, as no new frames appeared to cover events in the country. There was no development in the criticism directed toward those standing against the Soviet line, reporting had stabilised and was just continuing to frame the situation in Afghanistan as improving or normalising, highlighted through reports of the Afghan government taking control of domestic and international issues and the Afghan people actively battling the bandits themselves. This could be a sign of how reporting of the invasion of Afghanistan had developed had the world reaction remained just words, as with Hungary and Czechoslovakia, rather than add the boycott campaign and grain embargo.

There was a shift in how the boycott was reported in the build-up to the Games though, and it revolved around the facilities and technology available at the Games. There was much praise of these via the Radio Moscow network, from explanations about how the new technology centre would present many radio and video outputs to the world, through to praise for the Soviet facilities from non-Soviet sources. This praise was then linked to the reasons behind the boycott campaign and a desire, Radio Moscow claimed, by some governments and media groups to restrict access and coverage – they were worried that if the general public saw the Games without restriction they would be overly impressed with Soviet life and culture, and would see that some domestic reporting of the situation was a lie. The boycott campaign was framed as another example of trying to restrict access to the realities of Soviet life, not as a reaction to the invasion of Afghanistan.

There was a noticeable drop at this time in reports that concentrated on framing the boycott campaign around non-Afghan reasons, instead, even more so than after deadline day, Radio Moscow just focused on showing it was a failure. Whether this was through telling listeners of the amount of spectators, the new teams appearing at the Games (or alluding to the sizes of teams), or the amount of records broken in just the first few days, there was a clear pattern to not only emphasise the Moscow Games were a success, but to show the boycott campaign was,

in Radio Moscow's view, a failure. The Games, it was emphasised across the network, would boost mutual understanding, cooperation and peace – none of which the boycott campaign achieved. This was highlighted through reports that quoted some athletes praising the spirit at the Games, whilst others bemoaned the boycott campaign restricting their own chances. The boycott campaign was presented as a policy that harmed the athlete and divided governments from people. All these claims were to an extent localised, but the reporting surrounding the Games seems to be less localised than in previous months. With the Games now open and records tumbling, Radio Moscow had what it deemed irrevocable proof that the boycott had failed – a successful Games praised by people from all over the world. It did not need to localise this in the way that the reaction to the on-going boycott campaign required comment and rejection that could relate more easily to a listener. However, as they had split the issues of the Olympic boycott and the invasion of Afghanistan, they could not claim that the success of the Olympic Games was vindication for Soviet actions in Afghanistan.

CHAPTER 10

RADIO MOSCOW, AFGHANISTAN, THE MOSCOW OLYMPICS AND THE WORLD

By using frame analysis this thesis has demonstrated how Radio Moscow reported key moments after the invasion of Afghanistan and throughout the 1980 Olympic boycott campaign to different audiences across the world. Through this, it has explored what the frames were, how they were incorporated into events coverage, and how they were localised to best appeal to the targeted audience. In a field dominated by research into the broadcasts of Western stations, such as Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, Voice of America and the BBC, it has added to the small field of literature that currently exists on Radio Moscow broadcasting, and is the first work to examine and compare the frames used across the Soviet broadcaster's network to determine how it went about getting the Soviet message across to audiences worldwide. This thesis has demonstrated that Radio Moscow was not a one-message monolith, pumping out one line of Soviet propaganda worldwide. It took into account regional and local domestic issues in an attempt to produce news reporting that was considered relevant to the listener. However, there can be no getting away from the ever-present Cold War – Radio Moscow was set up to extol the virtues of Soviet society, and that is what it did on a daily basis, often in tandem with attacks on the United States and its allies, and actions Radio Moscow claimed resulted from harmful imperialist ambitions.

The frames discussed in the case studies can inform about more than just how Radio Moscow wanted the situation in 1980 presented. The variation and emphasis (or lack of) on frames in different regions can inform about the issues the broadcaster perceived were important to people and should be important to people. However, they can also tell us about how Radio Moscow, and therefore the Soviet leadership, viewed the world at this time and where they saw the fault lines in international and domestic politics, economics and society. They even suggest potential directions the Soviet Union may have followed when trying to expand its international influence.

The first section of this conclusion will bring together the frames seen throughout the case studies to discuss what these show about the Soviet world view in 1980. It will explore how the frames differed between regions, and how Radio Moscow evolved and even changed them as the situations in Afghanistan and surrounding the Olympic Games developed. The second section will explore the methods it used to do this, considering whether Eisenhower's claim that

Soviet broadcasting was ‘weaving a fantastical pattern of lies and twisted facts’ runs true.⁸⁵⁹ Finally, this conclusion will comment upon the usefulness of the Imperial War Museum’s BBC Monitoring Archive for detailed exploration of 20th Century radio broadcasting, and suggests opportunities for further research in this and related areas.

10.1 FRAME ANALYSIS AND THE SOVIET VIEW OF THE WORLD IN 1980

However Radio Moscow presented the situation in Afghanistan or the Olympic boycott campaign, the reporting could always be linked to the Cold War. Whether the frames used concentrated on international or domestic issues (insurgency, electioneering, imperialism) or concentrated on factors that can be deemed human interest (e.g. the religion or personification frames) they all supported Radio Moscow’s Cold War message. The four frames that news sits in, as proposed by Valkenburg et al, and discussed in the introduction (conflict, human-interest, responsibility and economic consequences) are clearly observable throughout the case studies. However, it is perhaps more pertinent to place Radio Moscow broadcasts within two broader themes – both very closely aligned to the overall Cold War frame. These are divisive frames and reinforcing frames. The divisive frames presented splits between groups, for example the electorate and the elected, or the United States and an ally. Other frames were used to reinforce views the Soviet Union broadcaster had already put across – historical frames linking current events to past endeavours, or a previously explained agenda or mentality (imperialism, aggression, electioneering, pretexts). When presented to different audiences, the balance of these frames provides insight into both where Radio Moscow thought they could build upon or begin to create divisions that would boost Soviet popularity, and where it considered the Soviet Union had enough influence that they could concentrate on reinforcement frames.

The balance of frames is also intricately linked with what the broadcaster considered targeted listeners thought important, and what the broadcaster considered people ought to know. These could range from discussing domestic concerns, such as in Britain unemployment issues or the troubles in Northern Ireland, through to emphasising how current international events would have a specific effect on the local region, for example how grain restrictions to the Soviet Union would harm food aid to Africa or export profits for North American farmers. Whether presenting an issue as divisive or as an example designed to reinforce previous claims/views,

⁸⁵⁹ Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989*. p.20

Radio Moscow localised reporting to best appeal to the target audience. Localisation was important for all broadcasters – an internal BBC report in 1979 made this clear:

*'Voice of America, though much easier to hear [than the BBC] is not widely regarded by the intelligentsia because it seems too concerned with domestic American politics and affairs which are of little interest to an educated Soviet audience.'*⁸⁶⁰

Without doubt, Soviet broadcasting was aware of the need to appeal, evidently more so than its rival Voice of America. Even using localisation though, Radio Moscow made sure the Soviet Cold War message was still evident.

Some clear themes can be picked up from the frames used to report the changing nature of both events. Of particular note is the emphasis on religion when localising world events in broadcasts via the Arabic service or to regions with large Muslim populations. It is apparent that the broadcasting tried to move away from any religious connotations in the Afghan conflict, for example by accusing those leading the Kabul uprising of being mercenaries, and emphasising that the Soviet backed Afghan regime was supporting Islam through continuing daily prayers and defending Islamic laws. This supports views that there were fears of religious upheaval linked to the invasion – particularly the fear that Islamic nationalism could spread from Iran, through Afghanistan, and into the Soviet Central Asian republics.⁸⁶¹ Additionally, it also shows an appreciation of the strength of religious feeling within Afghanistan, with many writers subsequently arguing that the Afghans were encouraged to fight a 'jihad' against 'hordes of infidels from the north'.⁸⁶² Even broadcasts about the Olympic facilities made mention of the prayer rooms and of taking into account religious holidays and practices. Not only were these attempts to break any ideas of a Soviet war against a group concentrated around religion, they were also useful as a means of trying to show which side of the Soviet-US divide Islam should fall.

In comparison, the United States was accused of exploiting the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers for its, and Israel's, own ends, and acting against the wishes of local states in its quest for oil from the Persian Gulf. Whilst this highlights the overall Cold War message of Radio Moscow, it also quite clearly showed that the broadcaster made especial effort to avoid blaming

⁸⁶⁰ BBC Russian Audience Research 1979, Memo titled 'Alexander Zinoviev's Comments on the Work of the BBC Russian Service'. 14th June 1979.

⁸⁶¹ Arnold, *Afghanistan, The Soviet Invasion in Perspective*. p.100, Borer, *Superpowers Defeated, Vietnam and Afghanistan Compared*. p.136

⁸⁶² Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History*. p.242, Girardet, *Afghanistan The Soviet War*. p.53

Islamic fundamentalism, or any religious connotations, for the problems in Afghanistan. The Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers was also accused of acting out US desires, but the way in which Radio Moscow discussed this also shows a clear attempt to avoid direct criticism of Islam. Radio Moscow criticised its resolutions, but provided excuses for these based on heavy US influence of a small selection of influential members. Rather than try and divide the Arab people from the body representing them, Radio Moscow tried to put across divisions within the body itself – those who wanted to discuss Arab well-being versus those who wanted to act out US desires that would harm Arab well-being. Clearly Radio Moscow felt that emphasising the harm caused by the United States could only be beneficial to Soviet standing amongst members of a transnational body that had only recently condemned its actions. From a world view perspective though, it all supplies evidence to support claims that the Soviet Union hierarchy were in fact mindful of the potential strength of the Islamic religion in 1980.

Whilst Radio Moscow was willing to blame US influence on the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers Resolution, it was not ready to do the same regarding the United Nations. The only comments on the UN recorded by BBC Monitoring relate to the initial Security Council rejection of complaints over Soviet actions in Afghanistan, there was no mention of the Emergency Session resolution condemning foreign interference. This silence suggests that for Radio Moscow, the United Nations could not be attacked, and any suggestion that US interference was winning over Soviet influence would look like defeat for Moscow. So there was silence – the United Nations could not be criticised.

Conversely, and unsurprisingly, the frames demonstrate how Radio Moscow was persistently trying to isolate the United States from allies such as Britain, West Germany, Italy or France. This was not done through telling listeners that the leaders were in dispute with the US, but by presenting a ‘them and us’ attitude – a division between the needs of the people and the wants and actions of the leadership. Radio Moscow tried to place itself, and the Soviet Union, very firmly on the side of the people. This is evident in broadcasts explaining the reasons behind the reaction to the invasion – President Carter was electioneering, Margaret Thatcher was trying to distract from domestic woe, the Italian Foreign Minister was allowing Italy to be exploited by the US – nowhere were the actions of the leadership presented as being in the interests of the people. The leadership had imperialist/colonialist/aggressive ambitions that the people lacked. The frames used to portray the anti-Soviet measures tried to emphasise the divides between the policies of Western European governments and the needs and desires of their people.

Whereas the focus on religion had blamed ‘America’, the closer to the US a targeted audience was both geographically and politically, the more the blame for problems was placed on the US

leadership. Western Europe heard much about the US Administration and about President Carter, whereas Asian and African listeners tended to hear about the aggression or imperialist motives of the United States as a whole. This can be seen to link to an acceptance of US and Soviet spheres of influence, and also of where the Soviet Union felt it could make the most gains in the future. Broadcasts to Western Europe concentrated upon blaming the leadership, suggesting an acceptance that this was primarily within the US sphere of influence – thus the only way forward was to try and engineer and emphasise divisions between the state leadership and the people. The same argument could be applied to Radio Free Europe and their own broadcasts to Eastern Europe, which also pursued the practice of trying to highlight divisions between the people and the leadership.⁸⁶³ Outside of what Radio Moscow saw as this sphere of influence, there were more generalised attacks on states as a whole – broadcasts to Africa and Asia, and in the Arabic language, all talked of US aggressive policy rather than US Administration aggressive policy. It was these areas where the Soviet Union perhaps considered itself stronger and with more opportunities for increasing influence – it was not looking to divide people from governments here, but entire states from the United States.

There was also a demonstrable Cold War attempt to attack western democracy. Leaders were presented as issuing anti-Soviet messages to boost their own chances of domestic electoral success, and the undercurrent argument here was that western elections caused aggression. The broadcasts of Radio Moscow made Margaret Thatcher and Jimmy Carter in particular the embodiment of all that was wrong with the Olympic boycott campaign, and much of this was to do with a desire to hide domestic discontent and boost their own popularity. Listeners were meant to believe that not only were the leaders not acting in the interests of the people, but the system was designed in such a way as to exacerbate this. Again, Radio Moscow evidently viewed the alliance between the US and its key allies as difficult to break, therefore the attempt was not to split state governments from the United States, but to divide people from state governments and even get the listener to reconsider the political system. Of course, Radio Moscow never sought to explain that the anti-Soviet policies being pursued to distract and win votes may have been pursued because they appealed to voters – and therefore the same people Radio Moscow wanted to appear on the side of were actually happy with anti-Soviet rhetoric.

For listeners in Western Europe and North America, Radio Moscow directed criticism onto leaderships, or even specific leaders in collaboration with President Carter. These leaderships

⁸⁶³ Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. p.113

were acting out foreign policy to hide domestic policy failings, and were far too concentrated on their own ambitions, in the form of elections and appealing to the electorate, to act in the best interests of those they represented. Outside of these areas, broadcast technique was slightly different, with a lot more focus on what the foreign policy actions of the US were leading to, and who else was involved. For example, Soviet listeners heard a lot more about US ambitions in the Persian Gulf and Washington-Peking alliances than were heard via broadcasts targeted at North America. The same applied for broadcasts into Asia, which concentrated on informing about the potential repercussions of US-Chinese ambitions, rather than explaining that it was domestic concerns that fuelled foreign policy ambition. The regional variations in this respect were based around who was in alliance with, or being exploited by, the United States, and what the localised motive was. Linking back to how the Soviet Union perceived the world at this time, it can be seen that there was a divide between those broadcasts which reinforced the aggressive foreign policy message, for example broadcasts into the Soviet Union, Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe, and those broadcasts which pushed the divisive frames, into Western Europe, Britain & Ireland, and North America. This is where the strongest divide in Radio Moscow broadcasting lay, and this division can be seen as NATO (plus France) versus the world. Radio Moscow was primarily trying to highlight divisions between the people and the governments in NATO states, whilst reinforcing claims of aggression and imperialism on the part of the US and its regional allies in broadcasts elsewhere. The overall argument remained constant, but the way it was framed very clearly varied by region.

The grain embargo and how some states went about preventing their athletes attending Moscow were both used to further push both the idea of divisiveness and to reinforce pre-existing opinions. Radio Moscow localised the grain embargo by either focusing on the producer or the consumer, depending on the target audience. So African service listeners were told about how the policy would cause starvation, North American service listeners about how it would cause a dent in profits. Both however, demonstrate how Radio Moscow was trying to divide the people from the United States by blaming local hardship on Washington policy. This was clearly a Cold War argument, but it was also evidence of how Radio Moscow went about localising reporting. Compared to other trade restrictions enacted on the Soviet Union at this time, the attention given to the grain embargo also demonstrates that Radio Moscow considered it something that was both important to the listener and something they should be told about regularly – especially as in doing this they could emphasise how it was United States policy apparently causing harm to local groups.

The reason that Radio Moscow emphasised the grain embargo, and equally continuously discussed the boycott threat, was that both could bring international politics into realms that

most directly affected the ‘typical person’. People need food and income, and, Radio Moscow claimed, the US led grain embargo would bring about damaging decreases in both. With the athletes, Radio Moscow liked to interview local athletes or discuss how they were missing out on the pinnacle of their profession – again bringing international politics to a more human level. This was also an opportunity to engage with human rights debates, and link this to other supposed human rights indiscretions caused by the United States and its supporters across the world. The overall portrayal was of policies being acted out by the leadership of the United States and its supporters with no regard for the human implications – both domestically and internationally.

Conversely, and to both frame the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan positively and counter claims made in foreign media, Soviet reporting of Afghanistan emphasised rebuilding, praise from Afghans, and in no instance made reference to Soviet troops actively engaging in combat operations. This contrasted with the United States and its allies, who were accused of pursuing policies of starvation, restricting the travel of athletes and supporting the destructive acts of mercenaries in Afghanistan. Radio Moscow put forward a picture of Soviet assistance in Afghanistan, of being in the background supplying support to a new leadership compatible with rural traditions, of offering help to Africa and being opposed to starvation policies. The Soviet broadcaster tried to project the view that US influence was based on hard rather than soft power – contrasting nicely with the view they tried to present of Soviet international influence. This was very definitely an example of the Cold War being at the heart of all the frames used to cover the situation. Radio Moscow wanted to project a world view of the United States pursuing policies that were directly harmful to people, and localised this throughout the course of the invasion and boycott campaign, whilst highlighting the good that the Soviet Union did – again placing a focus on more everyday results such as building houses or schools rather than debating high politics.

The broadcasts show that Radio Moscow believed that rather than discuss divisions between states and the US, it had to place emphasis on divisions between people and governments when appealing to listeners in Western Europe, Great Britain and North America states and the United States. The broadcasts to Britain very clearly told listeners that their government was a puppet of the US administration, copying its actions with no regard for domestic concerns. Evidently, it did not see a way of gaining influence in any other manner – the Soviet Union had to appeal directly to the workers and not the leadership. This in itself is perhaps a damning indictment of the communist parties in these regions, particularly France and Italy. Elsewhere, this was not the case. Broadcasts to African or Asian listeners concentrated more on blaming the United States

rather than the local leaderships, suggesting that the Soviet Union considered these leaderships potentially open to working more closely with Moscow.

Even as events evolved and changed, affecting what was reported, the overall frames remained relatively constant. Coverage of Afghanistan in particular went from persistent claims of quiet and calm to repeated reports of the situation slowly improving. Not only did this demonstrate Radio Moscow's capability to evolve the frames it used as stories developed, but these evolutions also demonstrated how it adapted to events that did not fit the previous frames – what can be termed 'frame ruptures'. For example, Radio Moscow had persistently told listeners across the world about how many states would appear at the Olympics, and when the official announcement was considerably lower than this, it was clear they had been mistaken. However, there was no admission of this mistake, merely a subtle shift in the frames used and a silent dropping of previous claims. Instead of discussing the number of states attending, the quantity frame, Radio Moscow shifted to discuss the quality frame – how good the athletes attending were, how many of the top 20 medal winning states from the previous Games would appear, and how these demonstrated boycott failure. They also whittled down the states not attending, providing non-boycott reasons for non-attendance – an inverse quantity frame. With Afghanistan the same actions applied – the February uprising seemed to show that all was not well, and thus Radio Moscow reporting had been erroneous, but the broadcaster merely changed the frame or did not mention it. Rather than everything being back to normal, Radio Moscow reported it was normalising, and used the Kabul uprising as justification for Soviet involvement in the region. It demonstrated that they were not afraid to report what could be perceived as Soviet failings, provided these perceived failings could be framed in such a way as to either reinforce previous Soviet actions or suggest divisions in the US camp.

A final comment to be made regards the subdivisions discussed by Paulu, and mentioned in the introduction to this thesis. His proposal that Radio Moscow broadcasting was divided into sections concentrating on North America, Latin America, Western Europe, Near and Middle East, Southeast Asia, the Far East, Africa, and the other socialist countries is certainly true.⁸⁶⁴ However, the localisation that occurred in the broadcasts within many of these regions ran far deeper. Radio Moscow took close account of the local concerns of people from different states, and so the broadcasting within these regions would vary – French, British, Italian and Spanish broadcasting all differed from one another in both content and concentration, as did broadcasting within the other regions listed – with the exception of the North American service,

⁸⁶⁴ Paulu, "Radio and Television Broadcasting in Eastern Europe." p.54

which largely bypassed Canada and concentrated on the United States. Radio Moscow was trying to present the Soviet system and win as many supporters as possible, and to do this it needed to present arguments that were both relevant and targeted – and that is what it attempted to do.

10.2 RADIO MOSCOW METHODS

Eisenhower accused Soviet broadcasting of ‘weaving a fantastic pattern of lies and twisted facts’, and as this thesis has demonstrated, there is some merit in his claim.⁸⁶⁵ However, in the Cold War ether the Soviet Union was not the only state who could be accused of ‘twisting facts’ to support an argument. The former Radio Free Europe Bureau Manager, Arch Puddington, wrote in his book ‘Broadcasting Freedom’ that,

*‘There is, of course, a risk in broadcasting even straight news reports to societies under totalitarian control, whose only recourse to misrule is resistance, violent or otherwise. Under totalitarian conditions, people are prone to hear what they want to hear’.*⁸⁶⁶

This is a clear reference to the Hungarian Uprising, and what many saw, and still see, as an episode in which Radio Free Europe encouraged citizens to revolt, with claims of broadcasts suggesting militant acts and implying Western military support. However, the point is quite clear – western broadcasters did not present the news as it was, they also twisted the facts – even if, as Puddington makes clear, the reason for doing so was to prevent bloodshed rather than incite. However, as RFE had a limit, so it seems did Radio Moscow. Even though the research from this thesis is based on material collected by monitors who concentrated on recording primarily political reports, the evidence supports Smith’s claim that Radio Moscow was not as overtly doctrinal as western media led people to believe.⁸⁶⁷ The broadcasting of Radio Moscow was far more succinct in fitting current events around the Soviet viewpoint. There were a number of ways it achieved this, with four of the most significant uncovered in this thesis outlined below.

⁸⁶⁵ Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950-1989*. p.20

⁸⁶⁶ Puddington, *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. p.112

⁸⁶⁷ Smith, “Some Effects of Radio Moscow’s North American Broadcasts.” p.539

10.2.1 The Grey Area

The overlying tendency when reporting events, such as the speeches made by President Carter, was not to repeat what was said or the facts of what had happened, but rather to discuss what it meant, the effects, and in some cases how a speech was delivered. In this manner the broadcaster could avoid the hard facts and instead focus upon the grey area of opinion – the US President may have made it clear in his speeches that the reason for trade restrictions and an Olympic boycott was the Soviet invasion, but by instead focusing on how these actions would affect others, Radio Moscow could bypass this criticism. Instead of reporting what was happening in Afghanistan, Radio Moscow reported opinions on what was happening. Additionally, the station could offer up reasons for the current events, ‘real’ reasons that avoided mention of Afghanistan and for the uninformed may have seemed accurate – especially if the reasons were grounded in some sort of historical truth. This tactic of discussing speeches and events, without directly referencing quotes or facts, allowed Radio Moscow to broadcast in the abstract. Opinion rather than fact allowed the broadcaster to fit events into the required frames. This was an important factor in the way Radio Moscow applied frames to their reporting, it attempted to shift the way listeners thought about events by trying to shift the main thrust away from what was said and onto why it was said.

10.2.2 Selective Reporting

Some regions did not receive coverage of certain events. This in itself could be explained as the ‘silence frame’ – a method of avoiding discussion of an event and trying to shift listeners’ minds onto something else. For example, the Afghan uprising in February 1980 does not appear, according to the BBC Monitoring information surveyed here, to have been reported in broadcasts to North America or Great Britain at the time. Now this could have been because Radio Moscow did not want to spread news that could highlight discord in Afghanistan at the time, although they did report this on other networks. More likely perhaps is that the reasons they claimed were behind the uprising when reporting to other regions, the instigators from the CIA and the secret services of Britain and others, would not be believed – they could not broadcast a claim to North American listeners that US instigators had incited an uprising without conclusive proof, and even then there may be an element of self-appreciation here. Radio Moscow was perceived as overly-doctrinal, as Smith’s 1974 study demonstrated, and the broadcaster may have avoided reporting anything too extreme to certain regions where it feared for its credibility. Which suggests Radio Moscow felt it needed some sort of credibility, and thus had to be selective in the reports it gave to specific regions.

10.2.3 Selective Sources

Credibility seems to have underlined the method of using sources to support the claims made by Radio Moscow. *Pravda* may have been the favoured newspaper for rebroadcasting opinion, but various other news sources from outside the Soviet Union also appeared. Choice quotation by Radio Moscow may have given the impression to foreign groups that these newspapers were siding with the Soviet Union, but it may have damaged Radio Moscow credibility had they broadcast claims about a certain newspaper to the area of that newspaper's readership, and been proved to be misinterpreting or falsifying their claims. Credibility was important, and the tendency to cite newspapers from foreign sources, rather than local ones, suggests they were trying to get around this by providing quotes from unobtainable sources.

10.2.4 Misrepresentation

To help support the frames, Radio Moscow can also be seen to have misrepresented facts and quotations when necessary. From exaggerating the number of participants planning to attend the Olympics, to stretching the truth and altering how statements were made, Radio Moscow used some practices that can at best be perceived as mistaken and at worst deliberately misleading. Some of the claims the broadcaster made, such as how many teams would be attending the Games, were misrepresenting the reality, however in the months of uncertainty before the Olympic deadline it was not clear how many teams would eventually agree to attend. The division between the national Olympic committees and the local governments added to this uncertainty, but aided Soviet radio. To boost the quantity Radio Moscow claimed would be attending, the broadcaster would quote sports officials, but these did not mean the team were officially attending. However, claiming President Carter asked rather than told US athletes that they were boycotting was extremely, and probably intentionally, misleading. It was not beneath Radio Moscow to misrepresent the truth and on occasion tell outright lies to get its point across when trying to frame an argument appealingly.

Occasionally, the broadcaster referenced what they deemed to be anti-Soviet material in the foreign press, such as a claim that the Daily Mail had promoted terrorist activities against the Soviet Union.⁸⁶⁸ However, many of the foreign sources Radio Moscow referenced were, if not completely favourable, at least partial to Soviet arguments. Whilst the Soviet state-controlled *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* regularly appeared in broadcasts to Eastern Europe and via the Moscow

⁸⁶⁸ IWM/SU/B/535 RM Home 23rd July 1980, 1830, no.5

Home service, and on occasion to other audiences elsewhere, European audiences could hear the opinions of the French communist party newspaper *L'Humanite*, and audiences elsewhere heard from sources such as the official newspaper of the Ethiopian communist party and media sources from around Vietnam, East Germany, Czechoslovakia and others. All had one thing in common – they were either the official news source of a communist party, or they were communist supporting newspapers.

Using sources foreign to the target audience was not only a good way of avoiding possible accusations of misrepresentation, but it could also provide the perception that there was wide ranging discord over the anti-Soviet measures – which for many would have tied in with what existed domestically, for example in Great Britain and Australia. A further method to suggest all round discord over the measures was through a section of broadcasting devoted to letters sent in by listeners. The names, and often the rough address, of the letter writers would be read out to give a more localised feel to the comments, and then the broadcaster would comment on the letter contents. Often these were praising the Soviet Union or condemning the acts instigated against it. So not only would listeners hear reports from foreign media, politicians or other groups supporting the arguments Radio Moscow put forward, but also comments from the general public in the local area. Coupled with the occasional letter criticising the Soviet Union, presumably to add balance and often swiftly dealt with by turning the complaint back on the United States or an ally, this method helped create a broad image of the unpopularity of the anti-Soviet actions.

Additionally, and perhaps something that can be a source of further investigation using the BBC Monitoring Archive, is a broader method Soviet foreign broadcasting was believed to use. Simo Mikkonen argues that,

*‘especially in Europe, [Radio Moscow] had negotiated a delicate distribution of labour with other socialist countries. Thus, letting other East European broadcasters carry part of the burden in Europe, Radio Moscow was able to concentrate on global affairs, as well as distance the more dirty campaigns from Radio Moscow.’*⁸⁶⁹

To an extent it explains how Radio Moscow could appear not overly doctrinal, despite the clear Cold War frame running throughout the broadcasting. However, as Mikkonen himself points out, Radio Moscow was the station with the ‘best audibility in all wavelengths... which made it

⁸⁶⁹ Mikkonen, “To Control the World’s Information Flows - Soviet Cold War Broadcasting.” p.267

the most widely heard foreign radio station beyond the borders of the Soviet Union'.⁸⁷⁰ So, whilst the ability to distance the more overtly doctrinal broadcasts may have been useful, the question again arises – how many people would actually have listened to these broadcasts?

The ability to shift debate away from the intended target by avoiding discussion of its source, the careful selection of foreign source material, and the selective reporting of events each helped create the freedom Radio Moscow needed to work on the frames required to report the two fluid situations. However, these were by no means the only methods Radio Moscow employed. Wordplay could also help when framing a speech to expand upon some of the points made and also to try and leave more of an impression in the mind of a listener. When discussing the Olympic boycott, Radio Moscow occasionally used sporting metaphors to describe the actions of President Carter, and some of the military aspects of his speeches were expanded to make them sound more menacing – rather than just sending troops to the Persian Gulf, the station in one instance listed the different types of unit and their capabilities, which not only took longer to read out but also left the listener without a doubt as to the US military menace. However, the methods of misrepresentation, careful selections of audience and source, and the concentration on the grey area of opinion rather than fact, were the most effective and most regularly employed methods used by Radio Moscow as a basis for creating the frames it hoped would win the arguments against the boycott campaign and get listeners to understand and support Soviet actions in Afghanistan.

To summarise, Radio Moscow used a variety of frames and methods in an attempt to achieve its aims. The frame analysis has highlighted that these aims were at a basic level very clear – to build support for the Soviet Union and weaken support for the United States. However, this was attempted through the intricacies of localising the output, finding what was thought to be a major concern in a region and relating it to the international politics of the Cold War – whether it was the human rights of athletes, domestic concerns regarding employment, local damage caused by policies such as the grain embargo, or impending elections. The case studies demonstrate how Radio Moscow persisted with its defence of Afghanistan and attack on the boycott campaign by using localised arguments such as these to distract from any accusations levelled at the Soviet Union itself. In bringing these together, this section has shown how these localised arguments actually demonstrate a Soviet view of the world and geopolitics at the time. There was a clear concern with religion, and there appears to have been an understanding that the Soviet Union could not feasibly appeal to governments in North America or Western Europe

⁸⁷⁰ Mikkonen, "To Control the World's Information Flows - Soviet Cold War Broadcasting." p.246

– they had to concentrate their arguments on the people. In Africa and Asia it is evident that they felt more capable of appealing to the state as a whole, with fewer frames designed to divide, and more on reinforcing previously made anti-US views. Equally, a study of frame analysis has demonstrated just how much information Soviet radio was willing to provide to listeners within the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. They were not starved of news, even news that could portray Moscow negatively. However, this was the case because of the ability of Radio Moscow to focus situations on the Cold War, and to frame even bad situations such as the reaction to Afghanistan in a manner that suggested it was the rest of the world, led by the United States, who were in the wrong.

The goal of framing situations to best portray the Soviet Union and discredit the United States was achieved through questionable means however. There can be no doubt that Radio Moscow localised reports, but it also often avoided using local sources to corroborate its stand. Quotes on the international situation were somewhat questionable and may have been taken out of a broader anti-Soviet context. Combined with Radio Moscow's apparent aversion to reporting 'straight facts' and its preference for reporting opinion, it is hardly surprising the broadcaster was able to develop a strong case for Soviet actions in Afghanistan and against the US-led boycott campaign. However, this again does show how developed Radio Moscow was, the reporters read local news and highlighted when they found supporting statements, using these on various broadcasts – Radio Moscow did its research and adapted reporting where necessary.

This thesis has demonstrated not only that Radio Moscow did not broadcast one line of argument worldwide, but that it took approaches relevant to the target audiences. It also targeted specific sectors of society depending on the perceived strength of Soviet support in the region. The invasion of Afghanistan and the Moscow boycott provided examples of how Radio Moscow both reported Soviet international actions that required a defensive approach and how it reported US-led actions that required an offensive approach. As this thesis has shown, there were a variety of methods used and a number of frames employed by a broadcaster that was not afraid to adapt, evolve and even change its line of argument as the events of 1980 changed. Radio Moscow was not a beacon of truth, nor was it a broadcaster of lies. Radio Moscow knew its audience, knew what it wanted to tell its audience, and knew how to frame events to achieve both whilst also keeping listeners fully aware of the overall Soviet Cold War message.

10.3 THE BBC MONITORING SERVICE ARCHIVE AND THE FUTURE

The Imperial War Museum's BBC Monitoring Service Archive has provided the vast majority of material used throughout this thesis. Without it, such in-depth analysis of previous broadcasting would not be possible. This thesis has demonstrated the extent to which BBC Monitoring recorded international radio broadcasting – however, it has only used Radio Moscow material, which is but a portion of the total radio material available in the collection. The archive provides vast potential for expanding current understanding of what was actually broadcast by state radio stations to audiences throughout the world during both the Cold War and the Second World War.

Use of the collection has however provided a set of unique challenges and important considerations that have had a bearing on how this research has been carried out. The advantage to using the Duxford material over the more commonly available digests is that it provides far more material to analyse – a digest by definition is merely a summary of information, and it is also something that has been previously examined and edited, thus being a further step away from the original broadcast. However, it must also be remembered that the information at Duxford is not a complete record of what was broadcast by the radio stations monitored – not everything could be recorded or needed to be. Even with this concern, it is the closest one can get to the original broadcasts currently known. It is also possibly unique in supplying English language coverage of translated broadcasts made by multiple states, and it must be remembered that the monitors themselves were employed to listen for how events were framed, and recorded in detail broadcasting of major events and other points of interest. They did not know what the editorial team would require, so they recorded more than necessary – the difference between the transcriptions and the actual broadcasts is likely to be unimportant news reports – reports on major events such as Afghanistan or the Olympic boycott would have been recorded in full.

Another consideration when using the archive material is that much of it has been translated, and so meanings can be lost or changed accidentally. However, it has to be remembered that this is shortwave broadcasting being noted down, and the technical issues that can arise using a medium that does not always provide the clearest broadcasting will have meant that the broadcasters themselves will have had to keep their broadcasting language clear and understandable – making it easier for listeners to hear even when words drop out, and thus making it easier for monitors to listen to and translate. For Radio Moscow in particular, there are many instances of the same broadcast being played out across regions, which allowed for checking and can be seen throughout the archive – at first glance one series of broadcasts may look less than another but may actually contain similar levels of material, just noted as

repetitions of previous broadcasts from another language service. This cross referencing in itself can provide a challenge, as it requires delving further into the archive to find material than may at first be expected.

With these thoughts in mind, further research into the archive can still provide great opportunities to further understanding of what was broadcast by international radio stations throughout the Cold War and the Second World War. As this conclusion has demonstrated, this source also provides another gateway to exploring how different states viewed global politics and the domestic concerns of their rivals during this time. Further use of the archive and the many different international broadcasters it holds would supply the opportunity to explore these themes in more detail.

Importantly, there is still comparatively little research into Radio Moscow compared with research into the likes of Voice of America and Radio Free Europe. One reason being a lack of information on what was broadcast – raising awareness of the archive will allow for further research into this area. Equally, it raises the possibility of comparative research, only previously explored by Robert Fortner, into how Radio Moscow directly compared in its reporting of events to Western broadcasters at the time. Moving away from Radio Moscow, examination of the archive holdings of broadcasters from the Second World War and other state broadcasters from the Cold War, such as Communist China, can build upon existing knowledge in a way that has yet to be achieved, and could not be achieved without the existence of archives such as the BBC Monitoring Service collection at Imperial War Museums, Duxford.

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SU/A – TASS

SU/B – Radio Moscow Home Service

SU/C – Radio Moscow broadcasts in English to North America, Great Britain & Ireland, South East Asia, Africa, and the English Language World Service.

SU/D – Radio Moscow broadcasts to Western Europe.

SU/E – Radio Moscow broadcasts to Eastern Europe.

SU/F – Radio Moscow broadcasts in other languages.

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